
MINUTES
NAVAL WEAPONS STATION (NAVWPNSTA) SEAL BEACH
RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD (RAB)
AND COMMUNITY MEETING
November 14, 2001

Participants:

Bradley, John / U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Clarke, Dean / Orange County Health Care Agency
Foreman, Kim / Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)
Garrison, Kirsten / CH2M HILL
Hamparsumian, Hamlet / Foster Wheeler Environmental
Le, Si / Southwest Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command (SWDIV)
Leibel, Katherine / DTSC
Monroe, Bruce
Schilling, Bob / Bechtel
Smith, Gregg / NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach Public Affairs Officer (PAO)
Tamashiro, Pei-Fen / NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach and RAB Navy Co-chair
Vesely, Gene
Whittenberg, Lee / City of Seal Beach
Willhite, Lindi / RAB Community Co-chair
Wong, Bryant / CH2M HILL

WELCOME

At 7:00 p.m., P. Tamashiro, Navy Co-chair and Base Installation Restoration Program (IRP) Coordinator opened the meeting by welcoming the participants and introduced L. Willhite, the Community Co-chair. P. Tamashiro apologized for those attendees' names that were missing from the attendance list provided at the Westminster Gate. She identified that for future RAB meetings, measures would be taken to ensure that the gate guards are aware of who plans to attend.

P. Tamashiro also introduced S. Le, the Remedial Project Manager (RPM) from SWDIV and G. Smith the PAO for NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

S. Le, provided the RAB with an overview of NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach's IRP project status. The following projects were highlighted:

- Sites 4, 5, and 6 Removal Site Evaluation
- Site 5 Removal Action
- Site 7 Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) and Action Memo
- Site 73 EE/CA and Action Memo
- SWMU 24 EE/CA and Action Memo

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- Focused Site Inspection (FSI) Phase II
 - Site 14 Baseline Survey Investigation
 - Groundwater Monitoring Program for Sites 40 and 70
 - Feasibility Study, Proposed Plan, and Record of Decision (ROD) for Sites 40 and 70
 - Treatability/Pilot Study for Sites 40 and 70

Copies of the Project Highlights slide presentation were made available as handouts at the meeting. Questions and answers made during and after the presentation are summarized below:

Slide 16

Question: What is the difference between an interim removal action and a full removal action?

Answer: An interim removal action is part of the overall remedial action. There are three types of removal actions including emergency, time-critical, and non-time critical removal actions.

Question: Could you please provide a brief summary of the previous sites discussed – Sites 7, 73, and SWMU 24?

Answer: Site 7 is the Station Landfill. Site 73 is the Water Tower Area (a presentation on the EE/CA for this site will be presented tonight by B. Schilling/Bechtel). SWMU 24 is the Demilitarization Facility (a presentation on this SWMU will be given sometime in 2002).

Question: What is being done at the Site 7, the Station Landfill?

Answer: The removal action at Site 7 involves completely excavating the buried debris in the area next to Perimeter Pond in the National Wildlife Refuge and repairing the cap on the non-National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) side to a two-foot minimum thickness, as well as long-term groundwater monitoring.

Comment by K. Foreman: I would like to request that a brief 1-slide summary be presented for each IR Site, discussing where the site is, what the contamination/problem is, and activity is being conducted.

Answer: General information regarding the site name and contamination/problem is presented in the first few slides of the presentation.

Slide 17

Question: Is the Baseline Groundwater Survey Investigation being conducted for Site 14 located at the locomotive shop?

Answer: No, the investigation is being conducted at the Station's former gas station fuel tanks

fuel tanks.

Slide 18

Question: Is the decision to reduce the groundwater monitoring frequency at Sites 40 and 70 from quarterly to annually based upon a reduction or lack of expansion in the size of the plume?

Answer: With the installation of 16 additional groundwater monitoring wells at Site 70, we were able to form a more accurate picture of the plume's extent. Also with the exception of Well 70-18, samples taken from these groundwater monitoring wells show that concentrations are stabilizing (only Well 70-18 appears to show an increase in TCE concentrations). Also, samples taken from additional wells installed at Site 40 indicate the plume extent is constant.

Question: There is no concern that the plume would migrate toward the NWR?

Answer: No, the plume is stable and not moving toward receptors. However, the plume will continue to be monitored through groundwater sampling for at least 5 years or until the contamination is addressed appropriately.

Slide 4

Question: At Site 4, Perimeter Road, there are two specific areas that were recommended for additional lead investigation. Please pinpoint these areas.

Answer: These sites are located between Perimeter Road and Site 7 along the south side of the Station.

Slide 20

Question: Two different types of remedial chemical technologies are being implemented at Sites 40 and 70 together. Why aren't remedial activities at these sites being handled separately?

Answer: Primarily for cost-effectiveness. For example, there are cost savings to the Navy by mobilizing fieldwork at the same time and using the same workplan.

Question: When will the pump test at Site 70 be conducted?

Answer: The workplan is still in the draft phase and we are currently preparing responses to agency comments. The pump test will most likely be conducted toward the end of January 2002.

Slide 7

Question: Were there any incidents during detonation of the high explosive items?

Answer: Several calls were received from the community during the detonations: two calls from Leisure World, one call from California State University at Long Beach, and one call from an *Orange County Register* reporter at home

in Sunset Beach.

Detonations occurred on Wednesday, November 7 and Thursday, November 8 and after 11 a.m. each day. A total of seven detonations occurred over these two days. Calls were received from the community on the second day after the last detonation had been conducted.

Question: Were the number of explosives found at Site 5 in line with what the previous investigations conducted for the site predicted?

Answer: The Navy was hoping not to find the number and magnitude of explosives found; however, the explosive items found were in line with what was suspected.

PRESENTATION - SITE 73 EE/CA - NON-TIME-CRITICAL REMOVAL ACTION (WATER TOWER AREA)

P. Tamashiro introduced B. Schilling, Bechtel, who gave an update on Site 73 EE/CA.

Copies of the slide presentation were made available as a handout at the meeting. The questions and answers posed throughout the presentation are summarized below:

Slide 5

Question: When you refer to the fence line in the vicinity of the Water Tower, do you mean the fence line along Seal Beach Boulevard?

Answer: Yes, the fence line runs parallel to Seal Beach Boulevard.

Question: What would cause the concentrated area of contamination along the fence line to occur such a distance away from the immediate source of contamination at Site 73?

Answer: Possibly prevailing wind conditions in the area.

While it is not uncommon to see elevated levels of lead along major thoroughfares (e.g., Seal Beach Boulevard) with the past use of leaded fuels, samples taken along the fence line adjacent to Seal Beach Boulevard to determine if there was a trend did not produce a pattern of consistently high results.

Question: Does the topography within Site 73 change a great deal? For instance, could surface drainage across the site carry contamination to this area?

Answer: No. Topography does not change to the degree that would explain the distribution of contamination at Site 73.

It was even thought that fence painting may have attributed to this concentrated area, however again, no systematic results were observed along the fence line.

With environmental engineering projects, sometime you have these types

of anomalies due to naturally occurring variations in soils.

Slide 20

Question: Data recovery was proposed as an excavation/backfilling action to sample a small amount of the total soil volume for cultural resources and then mechanical excavation would be conducted?

Answer: Yes. Archeologists felt that the site had been reasonably well categorized and data recovery was not needed on the entire volume of soil proposed to be removed. It was determined that only a limited sampling of soil to be excavated (15%) would need to be sampled if data recovery was conducted. Preliminary cost estimates for excavation, including data recovery, used the 15% estimate.

Slide 24

Question: Is the 30-day comment period associated with the Public Notice mandated or discretionary?

Answer: I don't know, the standard comment period for Public Notices associated with the IR Program has been 30 days.

Question: If the Public Notice is released on Thursday, November 22, the beginning of the Thanksgiving holiday, the public could lose 4-5 days of the comment period.

Answer: Good point.

Question: I suggest we extend the 30-day comment period to six weeks to allow the public ample time to comment. There are several people who will be interested in the archeological issues associated with the site. The City of Seal Beach Archeological Committee would be interested in the activities at Site 73 and how they would impact cultural resources.

Answer: To account for the Thanksgiving holiday, we will delay release of the Public Notice by one week and maintain the 30-day comment period from that date.

General

Question: What is the condition of the water tower? Does it have a useful life beyond removal of the lead contamination at Site 73? Will it be removed as part of the lead contamination removal action?

Answer: There is a separate project in the works to remove the water tower before this removal action takes place. Removal of the water tower will occur in the next few months and water tower footings will be left in place to avoid ground disturbance.

Question: Is the cost of removing the footings included in the cost estimate for the removal action?

Answer: Yes, removal of the footings is included in the project costs. There will be two projects involving the water tower. The first project involves dismantling the water tower, which is being coordinated by the base Public Works Department. The contractors removing the water tower are prohibited from disturbing the soil during removal, which is why the footings will remain in place until this removal action begins. The removal action to excavate the contaminated soils and remove the water tower footings is the second project.

Question: I understand that after the removal action is complete, Site 73 will be returned to a pre-project condition and the site will be revegetated with sod. However, would it be possible to revegetate the site with not only sod, but also shrubs and trees similar to those planted within the nearby NWR? Similar plantings in these two areas would improve the view of the area and improve the quantity and quality of vegetation adjacent to the NWR.

Answer: Suggestions regarding revegetation of the site are welcomed as part of the review process for the draft EE/CA.

Comment by K. Foreman and K. Leibel/DTSC Again, an opportunity for the public to comment on the project will occur after agency comments are received on the EE/CA. Before the removal action begins, the project will go through the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process (which includes another public notice) and analyzed for environmental consequences.

Question: Is the Navy or the DTSC the lead for the CEQA process?

Answer: DTSC is the lead because CEQA is a state environmental policy.

At the close of the Site 73 EE/CA Presentation, the NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach intranet site was highlighted because it showed a picture of the high explosive detonation conducted on November 7th and 8th. Explosions threw dirt several feet higher than the 18-20 foot high berms where the detonation took place.

The following questions and answers were posed:

Question: For the explosion shown in the picture on the intranet site, which explosion was it and which day was the detonation conducted?

Answer: The explosion illustrated in the picture occurred on the second day and was the third or the fourth detonation of the day.

Question: Is the picture showing the last detonation on the second day?

Answer: No.

Question: Will this picture be shown in this edition of the *Dispatch*?

Answer: No, but probably in the next issue.

PRESENTATION – SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

P. Tamashiro introduced B. Wong, CH2M HILL, who gave a presentation on Site Management Plan Update.

Copies of the slide presentation were made available as a handout at the meeting. The questions and answers posed immediately following the presentation are summarized below:

Slide 9

Question: Is the Current Status flowchart also presented in other ways in the Site Management Plan Update?

Answer: Yes. The status of the sites that comprise the current IR Program is discussed in the report in a narrative form and the flow chart is explained in the text of the report.

Question: Is the information also presented in a table format for easy reference?

Answer: Yes. Status tables present information on Sites 1 through 73.

Tables and charts are used in the report in addition to text discussions because the NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach IR Program is a complex program comprised of many sites.

Suggestion from P. Tamashiro: Could CH2M HILL please provide the Final Site Management Plan Update in a three-ring binder? The Site Management Plan document is one of the most useful documents for information about the IR Program. The Navy often pulls out pages and makes copies for distribution.

Answer: Yes. The Final Site Management Plan Update will be provided in a three-ring binder.

Question: How many copies of the final document will be provided to the Navy?

Answer: I will have to check the Scope of Work for the exact number.

The Navy will provide six copies to the PAO.

Question: Can the final report be made available in a CD-ROM format for easy distribution? The City of Seal Beach would like to be able to create a link on their web page to this document, once finalized.

Answer: Yes, however, currently DOD guidelines do not allow the Station to have any maps of the base available on a public web site.

Question: Maps of the Station are available at public libraries. Is this a problem?

Answer: No, I believe the concern is over the uncontrolled accessibility and anonymity afforded by the internet.

Question: Has financial information been excluded from the report for a reason? Is it available and can it be included?

Answer: Currently this information is not in the report. However, cost-to-complete models for each site could be included from the Navy's Report to Congress.

The Draft Site Management Plan Update report will be released to the RAB for review on November 15th. Comments to the report must be received by January 14, 2002. The following comments were submitted and recorded after the Site Management Plan Update presentation. These comments, along with all other public comments received during the review period, will be considered formal public comments and will be addressed before the report is finalized.

Comment by B. Monroe: When the IR Program began it was a very frustrating process because a lot of money was being spent on research and studies, but very little cleanup was actually occurring. Now that the IR Program has matured and more money is being spent on actual cleanup activities, it would be prudent to demonstrate the successes of the program and where the money has been spent.

As a taxpayer, I am very interested in this type of information and feel it would be beneficial to include it in the report, maybe as some kind of table.

Response: Yes, this information will be included in the final report.

Comment by K. Foreman: Also, it would be helpful to include some type of pie chart to show the percentage of cleanups and research that have been conducted.

Response: Yes, this information is readily available from Department of Navy's annual Report to Congress and can be incorporated into the Final Site Management Plan Update.

Comment by K. Foreman and K. Leibel: Also, other documents include Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). It would be beneficial to incorporate some FAQs for the IR Program so that the average citizen could read through a short amount of information and be satisfied with an understanding of the program status without having to interpret all the technical graphs, tables, and flowcharts.

Response: The PAO and/or Navy Co-Chair will identify some FAQs that would be appropriate to incorporate into the Final Site Management Plan Update.

P. Tamashiro confirmed that attendees did not have any more immediate comments and concluded the discussion. It was identified that additional comments to the Draft Site Management Plan Update would be accepted until January 14, 2002 and that comments should be submitted to the Navy via e-mail and/or U.S. mail.

COMMUNITY FORUM

P. Tamashiro opened the Community Forum and announced that no RAB meeting would be held in December. RAB members were encouraged to take the next month and review recent reports submitted for their review. Comments can be submitted via e-mail or U.S. mail to G. Smith or P. Tamashiro.

P. Tamashiro also identified that modifications had been made to the October 10, 2001 RAB Meeting Minutes. The modified version of the meeting minutes was made available as a handout at the meeting. The following information summarizes the modifications:

Page 4, 3rd answer from top of page: Should say "839,000 parts per billion (ppb)," not "839,000 parts per million."

Page 5, Slide 34, 1st Answer, 2nd sentence: Change from "The results of an El Nino year indicate no tendency..." to "The results of an El Nino year indicate a tendency..."

Page 5, Slide 34, 2nd Answer, 2nd sentence: Change from "This approach will be part of..." to "This approach is part of..."

Page 6, Slide 41, 3rd Answer: Change to read as follows:

"Yes, interbedded layers of fine-grained sands, silts and clays exist throughout the plume, and these layers are not continuous. There is a clay layer at about 170 to 190 feet that appears to be continuous and serves to prevent downward migration of the plume to the deeper water-bearing intervals."

Page 8, Slide 81, 1st Answer: Change "...is occurring..." to "...will be conducted..."

P. Tamashiro announced that the next RAB meeting would be held on January 9, 2002. The tentative agenda includes presentations on SWMU 24 EE/CA (Station Demilitarization Furnace) and Site 22 (Oil Island).

In addition, P. Tamashiro requested that the RAB meeting schedule be changed to encourage attendance. It was proposed that RAB meetings occur on the first Wednesday of each month (instead of the second Wednesday of each month, as is now occurring). Attendees were asked if they had any conflicts with this newly proposed schedule.

The following responses were provided:

Response by L. Whittenberg: Yes, I have a conflict. The City of Seal Beach Planning Commission meetings are usually held during the first Wednesday of each month, unless there is no Monday before the first Wednesday of the month. However, I'm sure we will still have ample representation and an opportunity to review and comment to IR Program reports.

P. Tamashiro indicated that this response would be added to the meeting minutes and requested input from additional RAB members in the coming weeks who were not present to respond at the RAB meeting. It was noted that a decision on the change in schedule

would not occur immediately and not affect the next scheduled RAB meeting on January 9, 2002.

The following questions and answers were posed during the Community Forum:

Question: Has any recruiting for RAB members been conducted lately?

Answer: Three hundred letters were sent out and no response has been received in answer to the request for interest in RAB membership.

If anyone has any suggestions for interested members, please contact P. Tamashiro.

Question: There is reference in the October 10, 2001 Meeting Minutes to a RAB Newsletter. Are we preparing a newsletter for the IR Program?

Answer: No, this statement needs clarification. Procedural guidelines for access to the Station will be provided in the cover letter to the next RAB Meeting Minutes.

P. Tamashiro concluded the Community Forum by thanking everyone for attending the RAB meeting and wishing everyone a safe holiday.

ADJOURNMENT

P. Tamashiro adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.