

MINUTES
NAVAL WEAPONS STATION (NAVWPNSTA) SEAL BEACH
RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD (RAB)
AND COMMUNITY MEETING
City of Seal Beach Council Chambers
January 10, 2018

Participants:

Arnold, Barbara /Community Member
Arnold, Pete /Community Member
Bettencourt, Philip /RAB Community Co-Chair
Caragan, Lynn /APTIM
Cummings, Esther /Friends of Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge (NWR)
Downs-Heimes, Dana /KCH
Feenstra, Chuck /Community Member
Gauthier, Marilyn /KCH
Hall, Darrell /KCH
Lee, Karen /Community Member
Lee, Larry /RAB Community Member
Masseti, Nick /RAB Community Member
Moreno, Jorge /Community Member
Pierce, Jim / ACTenviro
Reese, Brenda /Remedial Project Manager (RPM), Naval Facilities Engineering Command
Southwest
Smith, Gregg /Public Affairs Officer, NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach
Tamashiro, Pei- Fen /RAB Navy Co-Chair, NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach
Vance, Carolyn /Friends of Seal Beach NWR
Vesely, R. Gene /RAB Community Member

Welcome

Pei-Fen Tamashiro commenced the meeting at 6:00 pm at the City of Seal Beach Council Chambers by introducing Gregg Smith, the Public Affairs Officer for NAVWPNSTA Seal Beach and Phillip Bettencourt, the RAB Community Co-Chair. All attendees were asked to introduce himself or herself.

Presentation

Brenda presented the project highlights for the Installation Restoration Program (IRP) and Munitions Response Program (MRP) at Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach. The current status of the IRP sites was discussed:

- Site 7, Station Landfill - Semiannual Landfill Cover Inspections and Maintenance.
- Site 70, Research, Testing, and Evaluation Area – Remedial Action Operation.

- Site 74, Former Skeet Range – Feasibility Study/Proposed Plan/Record of Decision.
- Site 75, KAYO-SB Agriculture Well – Potential Navy Legal Investigation for Potentially Responsible Parties.

The current status of the MRP sites was discussed:

- UXO 1 (Primer/Salvage Yard and Port of Long Beach (POLB) Mitigation Pond) – Remedial Investigation
- UXO 6 (Westminster POLB Fill Area) – Remedial Investigation
- AOC 2 (Explosives Drop Test Tower) – Remedial Investigation

Questions and answers discussed during the Project Highlights are summarized below.

Site 7

Question: What is the yellow mesh on site at the landfill next to the dirt road?

Answer: It is the jute mesh used for erosion control.

Site 70

Question: Are you going to drill more wells?

Answer: The Navy is doing additional investigation in the source area and the leading edge of the plume. Two new wells were just installed in the source area recently. Yes, we most likely will install additional wells as project goes on.

Question: Is the mass receding or the chemical constituents degrading?

Answer: The primary contamination at Site 70 is trichloroethylene (TCE), which degrades dichloroethylene (DCE) and then to vinyl chloride (VC) by removing one chlorine at a time. Now there is a mix of DCE and VC in the plume. It is hard to get it down to ethene. We anticipate there is still more than 30 years of work ahead of us. The good news is that the plume is not in the drinking water formation, and we will do our best to keep it that way.

Site 74

Question: Can you give us an update on the ricochet situation from the small arms range?

Answer: In the most recent survey done along Case Road on November 16, 2017, we found 7 fragments out of over 68,000 rounds fired in the range. The next survey will be in March. Currently, only two of the three subranges are being used by Navy personnel.

Comment: Last time you mentioned mitigation as a solution.

Answer: We are still evaluating if it is necessary to redo the feasibility study for the remedial action. If it is decided that it is necessary, mitigation may be considered as one of the alternatives.

Site 75

Question: If the constituents are coming from offsite, other entities in the city must have some responsibility?

Answer: We have identified a few sites as potential responsible parties.

Comment: There is a light industrial complex upstream.

Answer: Yes, there are industrial sources to the east of the station.

Question: Boeing doesn't use these chemicals, right?

Answer: There are several groundwater plumes originating from Boeing's Huntington Beach facility. One of them did reach the Navy's property just north of Site 75. Boeing is keeping an eye on that. Some of the contaminants found in Site 75 groundwater plume do match some of the contaminants found in groundwater plumes originated from Boeing's facility, but we cannot confirm whether the contamination found in Site 75 is partially attributed to the contamination found in Boeing's Huntington Beach facility. There are also other industrial operations in the area.

Question: The contamination is not fecal. They are solvents, right?

Answer: Yes, they are mostly solvents and Freons.

Post-Presentation Discussions

Question: On the Breitburn site is there any remediation work? Is it still Breitburn?

Answer: The last report we received still had Breitburn on the letterhead. The heavy metals in the ponds are considered ecological concerns. The only IRP activities on Oil Island are related to pond monitoring. This is to ensure that wildlife don't use the ponds in order to minimize heavy metal exposure to ecological receptors.

Question: Are they monitoring the service vehicles?

Answer: Brietburn's vehicles enter the island from PCH. The island is constructed in such a way that any minor spills or leaks from the vehicles or oil production will be captured by the ponds on the island. Petroleum products would leak into the surrounding wetlands only under a massive spill or leak, which did happen several years ago.

B. Reese continued with her presentation on an overview of the budget.

Questions post-presentation

Question: UXOs are found in two main areas. Will the studies be made public?

Answer: Yes, all of the studies and investigations the Navy does under the IRP and MRP are public information. You can find all of the recent work plans and reports generated from these programs posted on the station's website.

Post-meeting information: the website address is:

http://www.cnmc.navy.mil/regions/cnrsw/installations/nws_seal_beach/om/environmental_support/environmental_cleanup/seal_beach/documents.html

Question: What is the source of the shot? Munitions that didn't go off? Training? Fell off of a truck?

Answer: This will be shown in the presentation. The majority of metallic debris found at these sites were not munitions related, and the majority of the munitions items found present no explosive hazard. Most of these munitions items were discarded or buried at the site.

Question: Is it ordnance? Unexploded ordnance? For residents in the surrounding community, should we be concerned living so close to these UXOs?

Answer: In the past, we used the term "UXO" loosely. By definition, unexploded ordnance, or UXO, is any ammunition or explosive ordnance that has failed to function as intended. An UXO, if found, poses an explosive hazard because it still contains explosives. However, most of the items we found were the remnants of munitions that had been functioned or spent and contained no explosives. If it is an item that may still contain explosives or pose an explosive hazard, it is called munitions and explosives of concern, or MEC. The DoD has very strict safety requirements in handling these items. Procedures are developed to ensure least amount of impact to workers and surrounding communities. The Navy will notify the neighboring communities and business of potential impact, if we encounter an item that will require some sort of response action.

Comment: Make that clear in the report.

Answer: Yes, we will.

Comment: Are they still dumping munitions in the ocean?

Response from PAO: I was a sailor in the 1980s, and policies were not in place then. Now nothing is dumped overboard, not even trash.

Response: We have not found munitions item in Anaheim Bay during recent dredging.

Question: Are there any plans to test the soil on the north side for contaminants, north of Westminster?

Answer: The north side of the base has been used for agriculture purpose for a long time. In the future, if the land changes use, environmental studies will be performed.

Question: Regarding IR Site 70, does the federal process expect compensation from offsite businesses?

Answer: If we prevail, the settlement money goes into the Navy's Environmental Restoration Program to do more environmental cleanup projects. We hope some comes here.

Question: Is long-term monitoring included in the budget?

Answer: Yes. The budget does not include salaries and operational expenses. The numbers are higher if you include Navy personnel.

Break

Presentation

Pei-Fen introduced Dana Downs-Heimes. Dana presented the results of initial work at UXO 1, UXO 6, and AOC 2.

Questions and answers discussed during the technical presentation are summarized below.

Question: Once the sites are cleaned up what is the plan?

Answer: There are different considerations depending on the findings. First we must characterize each location and evaluate if any actions need to be taken to mitigate any environmental or human health concerns. The Navy will also need to evaluate future land use for each location. If there are no other environmental issues, a low cost land use control may be a cost-effective way to prevent personnel from being exposed to the site.

Question: If you find live ammunition, will you remove it?

Answer: Prior to geophysical survey at each of the sites, all metallic debris, including munitions debris, have been removed from the surface. All metallic debris encountered during intrusive investigation have also been removed.

Question: For the new bunkers did they prepare a soils report for all the soils that were brought in for the construction?

Answer: Yes, all imported soils from off-site locations all went through chemical composition and geotechnical evaluation before they are allowed to be brought in.

Comment: We are seeing green sea turtles in the pond.

Response: Yes.

Question: What year was the pond (referred to 7th Street Pond) built?

Answer: 1989

Question: Are you doing biological monitoring? What type?

Answer: At the pond site, the biologist looked out for the turtles and birds.

Question: What are the seed items (used for geophysical survey)?

Answer: The seeds are made with 1"x4" pipes. Underwater we use a larger pipe. They are used to show that the equipment can detect them. We know the instrument should get a response performing the digital geophysical mapping.

Question: But people don't know where they are.

Answer: Yes, they are blind to the surveyor to ensure they can find them, just like finding the real targets.

Question: How deep underground can you measure?

Answer: The detection depth depends on the size of the item. The digital geophysical mapping (DGM) was originally used to find drums but was modified to find smaller items. For large items they can be sensed 4 to 6 feet and small items to 2 feet deep.

Question: Drums?

Answer: It was developed in the 1970's to find drums, but it is not used for that here.

Question: So there are no buried drums?

Answer: No.

Comment: I worked in the salvage yard when I was in the Navy. It had a huge shredder, which could be why the metal fragments are everywhere. The site contained

palletized empty containers. There must be so many fragments because of the shredder.

Answer: That is good information. We saw so many metallic debris that could not identify.

Comment: Back then inspectors did come around to inspect the containers.

Response: They did a good job shredding from what we found.

Question: What was the purpose of the eel grass survey?

Answer: The purpose of the eel grass surveys were to establish a baseline for the eel grass habitat and to compare this to the condition of the eel grass after the project was completed to see if the eel grass was damaged during site activities.

Question: What is a flash tube?

Answer: There is a casing on back of a round with a primer at the base of it. The tube goes up through the propellant to carry the shot from the primer into the material. It's a metal tube.

Question: Were other debris like batteries or transformers found?

Answer: No, we did not find batteries or transformers at the site.

Question: Are you testing for radioactivity?

Answer: Historically there was no radioactive material handled at these sites; therefore, radioactivity sampling was not part of the scope.

Question: Will the final report look at the feasibility of removing the tower?

Answer: We had a conversation with DTSC. Since the surface is all picked up we can now continue with removing the tower.

Question: Or just wrapping the tower?

Answer: The only thing we can remove is from the ground up. Since we have not completed the underground portion of the investigation, we may not engage in the excavation of the footings at this time.

Question: What is the plan for the buildings in the Research, Testing, and Evaluation (RT&E) area?

Answer: The current plan is to demolish the majority of the buildings there.

Question: What is the schedule?

Answer: We are currently preparing the contract package.

Question: When is the next public inspection? Tour?

Answer: We do it every other year, so in July 2019. We could schedule one if there was enough interest. However, currently there is not a lot of field work going on.

Adjournment

Pei-Fen adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:15 pm.

Note: This is a meeting summary, not an actual transcript.