

MEETING MINUTES

Naval Air Station Whidbey Island Restoration Advisory Board Meeting May 17, 2021

PREPARED FOR: NAVFAC NW

PREPARED BY: Battelle

DATE: June 10, 2021

SUBJECT: Summary of Meeting Minutes from the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB)
Meeting, Held virtually on WebEx on May 17, 2021

Purpose

The purpose of this meeting is to update the public on the restoration program and be part of ongoing actions by providing input on the status of the site.

Navy Staff: Captain Matt Arny
Melissa Gehrmann (Navy co-chair)
Kendra Clubb (Navy co-chair)
Laura Himes
Kristeen Bennett
Chris Generous
Walt Bowles
James Johnson
Mike Welding

RAB Members:
Kathy Lester (outgoing Community Co-chair)
Celine Servatius
Madeline Rose
Joseph Grogan
Philip A. Derise
Al Williams

RAB Members (non-voting):
Chan Pongkhamsing, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Sandra Caldwell, Washington State Department of Ecology
Ron Johnson, Washington State Department of Ecology

Citizens: Doug Kelly – elected as new RAB member and community co-chair during this meeting
Rhonda Kaetzel – Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)
Paul Perlwitz
Richard Fort
Marti Macys

Jennifer Madsen

Facilitator/Webinar assistance

JoAnn Grady
Mary Combs
Deepti Nair
Jody Lipps
Lori Stefano (stenographer)

Summary

This document presents a summary of the May 17, 2021 RAB Meeting. The meeting summary is divided into seven main sections:

- Part 1: Introductions
- Part 2: Area 6 Update
- Part 3: Military Munitions Response Program (MRP) Update
- Part 4: Petroleum Restoration Program Update
- Part 5: Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Update
- Part 6: Miscellaneous Discussion Items
- Part 7: RAB Vote and Action Items

Part 1 Introductions

Introductions

- JoAnn Grady began the RAB meeting by introducing herself and welcoming everyone. She asked everyone to put their name into the chat as they signed in. She then turned it over to Ms. Kendra Clubb.
- Ms. Clubb, Naval Air Station (NAS) Whidbey Island (NASWI) Remedial Project Manager (RPM), went over the agenda for the meeting and introduced the Whidbey RAB team. Ms. Clubb introduced Captain Army and turned it over to him.
- Captain Army thanked the team for putting the RAB meeting together and RAB members for their continued effort in this important aspect of Whidbey's environmental programs.
- Ms. Clubb then introduced those individuals on the call that were either presenting or involved in the RAB meeting in other ways. Ms. Clubb began by introducing the Navy co-chairs who were Ms. Clubb and Ms. Melissa Gehrmann.
- Ms. Gehrmann introduced herself as the Installation Environmental Director at NASWI, having just started the position in January.
- Ms. Clubb then introduced the two other NASWI RPMs, Ms. Laura Himes and Ms. Kristeen Bennett, who introduced themselves. Ms. Clubb then introduced Mr. Chris Generous as a subject matter expert on the munitions project and the two Public Affairs Officers (PAOs), Mr. Mike Welding and Mr. Ken Johnson. Ms. Clubb introduced the rest of the team that helped put on the RAB meeting including Ms. Mary Combs, the meeting hostess, Ms. JoAnn Grady, the meeting facilitator, Ms. Deepti Nair and Ms. Jody Lipps, IT support, and Ms. Lori Stefano, the stenographer. Ms. Clubb then introduced the RAB members and took attendance.
- Mr. Pongkhamsing from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) clarified its role at Whidbey Island. Mr. Pongkhamsing has been the EPA Coordinator/Project Manager since 2018,

about three and a half years, and his roles and responsibilities include collaborating closely with the NAVFAC team on all of the projects and activities to ensure adherence to the regulations, guidelines, and policies of Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), and its companion, the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, referred to as NCP. Mr. Pongkhamsing also thanked the Navy for putting on the RAB meeting and emphasized the importance of community involvement in the CERCLA process.

- Mr. Johnson and Ms. Caldwell from the Department of Ecology also introduced themselves and Ms. Caldwell explained that she is the Unit Supervisor for the Toxics Cleanup Program and works closely with Mr. Johnson, Mr. Shaljian (who could not attend the meeting), and the Navy on NASWI, as it pertains to cleanup with the State Toxics Control Act.
- Ms. Clubb also introduced Ms. Kaetzel from the ATSDR.
- Ms. Clubb requested a moment of silence for RAB member David Macys who passed away in February 2021. She stated that Mr. Macys worked for the Navy for 31 years as a toxicologist, industrial hygienist, safety director, environmental director, and executive officer. After retiring from the Navy as Captain, Mr. Macys enjoyed volunteering for several groups in Island County, including the Community Health Advisory Board, Environmental Health Assessment Team, and the NASWI RAB. Mr. Macys was a member of the RAB for 15 years and his calm presence and ability to educate the community will be missed. He was extremely knowledgeable and if a topic was not clear to the public, he was first to jump in and try to clarify and alleviate any concerns. Ms. Clubb shared sincere condolences to his wife of 35 years, Marti Macys.

RAB Charter

- Ms. Grady went over the ground rules for the RAB meeting. Ms. Grady shared information on the WebEx functions and how to use them; indicated that the RAB meeting would be run like a city council meeting using the Roberts Rules of Order. Ms. Grady stated that questions should only be asked after each presentation by RAB members. Questions from the public would be addressed during the Community portion of the presentation.
- Ms. Gehrman gave a quick overview of the RAB. A RAB is a stakeholder group that meets, on a regular basis, to discuss environmental restoration at a specific property that is either currently or was formerly owned by the Department of Defense (DoD), and where the DoD oversees the environmental restoration process. Members of the RAB act as conduits to share information between the community and the Navy which is a very important role. Environmental restoration includes all environmental investigations and/or cleanup that fall under the CERCLA regulatory framework which also includes MRP and State-regulated petroleum cleanups. It does not include installation compliance issues such as pipeline, underground storage tanks (USTs), stormwater, etc. More information on the RAB is included in the RAB Rule Handbook which can be found at the link (<http://www.denix.osd.mil/rab/home/>).

Administrative

- Ms. Gehrman asked the RAB members to approve the October 2019 RAB meeting minutes. Ms. Rose motioned, and Mr. Williams seconded the motion; thus the minutes were approved by the RAB members.
- Review October 2019 RAB Action Items

- Action Item #1: How much free product has been recovered from the Fuel Farm in the last few months? Ms. Gehrman explained that between the 2019 and 2020 field season, 7.4 gallons of fuel was recovered during the winter months at Former Fuel Farms 1, 2, and 3.
- Action Item #2: Is the Navy still sampling petroleum annually at the Marina? Ms. Gehrman explained that currently, there is no requirement for the Navy to sample petroleum at the Marina; however, the Navy Stormwater Compliance Program is proactively developing a plan to sample total petroleum hydrocarbons at stormwater outfalls if a sheen is observed.
- Community Co-Chair nominations and new RAB member voting will be conducted at the end of the RAB meeting. Ms. Gehrman asked for any nominations for co-chair to be provided via the chat. Two nominations provided prior to the meeting include Mr. Doug Kelly and Mr. Gary Winlund.

NASWI Overview

- Ms. Himes provided an overview of the restoration sites and the locations of all of the sites in Ault Field, Seaplane Base, OLF Coupeville, and Lake Hancock.

Part 2 Area 6 Update

- Ms. Himes summarized the Area 6 site. There are two distinct areas out of Area 6, which is the Former Industrial Waste Disposal Area and the Navy Municipal Landfill. Cleanup began back in 1993, with a Record of Decision. 1,4-Dioxane was discovered in 2003. The current groundwater treatment system does not treat 1,4-dioxane. A Record of Decision (ROD) Amendment was finalized in September 2019 and it changes the groundwater treatment system to treat 1,4-dioxane.
- Ms. Himes went over work conducted since the last RAB meeting including:
 - Constructing a new Southern Advanced Oxidation Process Groundwater Treatment Plant. This has included preparing work plans, securing real estate agreements with the City of Oak Harbor and Washington State Department of Transportation for the portion of the plant along State Route 20, and conducting the construction work.
 - Routine operations include land use control (LUC) inspections, continuing to operate the current groundwater treatment system, landfill maintenance and operation, and annual groundwater monitoring.
- Ms. Himes provided a brief overview of the implementation of the ROD amendment:
 - Amendment adds 1,4-dioxane which was not included in the original ROD, removed some chemicals that have reached cleanup levels, and modified cleanup levels for chemicals that have changed over time.
 - Adding a new treatment system to the south and upgrading the existing air stripper treatment system to advanced oxidation. Photos of the ongoing construction of the new treatment system were shown in the presentation.
 - The treatment will transition from active treatment to passive monitored natural attenuation (MNA) at the point when the efficacy of MNA is shown. Institutional controls (ICs) will also be part of the remedy.

- Planned work before next RAB meeting:
 - New treatment plant completion and online (tentatively schedule for end of June 2021).
 - Design for the Western Advanced Oxidation Treatment System, which will upgrade the current air stripper system to advanced oxidation.
 - Continue with current remediation efforts at Area 6 including routine operations which include LUC inspections, operating existing air stripper system (as well as new system once online), and conducting groundwater monitoring.

RAB members had the following questions.

- Mr. Williams asked if there are any indications that the process has been effective, and if so, at what level of completion it might be.
 - Ms. Himes explained that the new system is not operational yet, but is expected to be by the end of June. During the time of system startup, the Navy will be collecting system influent and system effluent samples to make sure 1,4-dioxane is being treated. The Navy will be making sure the system is operating and will have data together by the next RAB meeting to say whether the new system is operating as intended.
- Ms. Lester asked if the system that is currently operating will be shut down for a period of time and will there be a period when no treatment system is running while getting everything back online with the new stuff.
 - Ms. Himes explained that the new system will be online soon and will capture a good portion of the groundwater plume. One of the reasons the Southern plant was installed prior to upgrading the Western plant was so there would be continued capture of the plume while upgrading the Western plant. Based on groundwater modeling the Navy will continue to treat the plume with the Southern plant while the Western plant is being upgraded.
- Mr. Grogan said at the last RAB meeting it was mentioned that the system was designed to accommodate PFAS in the future. Has there been any monitoring for PFAS since then?
 - Ms. Himes explained that the Navy is going to be monitoring for PFAS. If there is an issue with PFAS, the Navy will move forward towards treatment. The main concern is that the Advanced Oxidation process can take the precursors over to PFOS and PFOA and the Navy would have to monitor to make sure it doesn't do that. That is the current plan but there are no data at this point supporting the need to do PFAS treatment on either of the Advanced Oxidation systems.

Part 3 Military Munitions Response Program Update

- Ms. Himes summarized the munitions response work conducted since the last RAB meeting. No work is currently being conducted at any sites at Ault Field and Seaplane Base. The only site where work has occurred is Former Lake Hancock Target Range. The 2020 removal action was conducted in July and August 2020. 168 munitions anomalies were found compared to 223 munitions anomalies found in the 2018-2019 field event. The presentation showed a picture of the signs and fencing installed around the site and a picture of a 2.75-inch practice warhead from the 2020 surface clearance.
- Ms. Himes also summarized the work planned before the next RAB meeting.
 - The Navy is working on finalizing the 2020 Surface Clearance Completion Report.

- LUCs at this site include annual inspections and the 2021 surface clearance of munitions debris within the entire removal action area.

RAB members had no questions.

Part 4 Petroleum Restoration Program Update

- Ms. Himes reviewed work conducted since the last RAB meeting including:
 - At Building 357, groundwater monitoring has been discontinued and the Navy is awaiting a no further action (NFA) determination from Ecology. When that is secured, the site will be removed from the program.
 - Continued free product recovery and groundwater monitoring sampling.
 - At Fuel Farm 1, approximately one cup of product was recovered from the wells during the 2019-2020 field season. The area is fenced to secure the partially decommissioned tank from the public access.
 - At Fuel Farm 2, approximately one gallon of product was recovered from the well during the 2019-2020 field season.
 - At Fuel Farm 3, approximately 6.4 gallons of product was removed during the 2019-2020 field season.
 - At the former A3 Monument UST site, soil sampling was conducted on May 11, 2021. If further excavation is required, it will occur in the September/October 2021 timeframe.

RAB members had the following questions.

- Mr. Grogan asked when mentioning partially removed, how many tanks have still not been removed from the tank farm sites.
 - Ms. Bennett explained that there was one tank at Fuel Farm 1 that has been emptied and cleaned out but remains at the site. The tank was modified to use as a potential bioventing tank. The construction and modification were never finished so the tank has never been used. Therefore, there is a fence around it. At the other sites, tanks that were not removed were cleaned and filled with concrete.
- Ms. Bennett also added that the Navy did receive NFA from Ecology for Building 357 on Friday, May 14th and didn't have time to change the presentation before the meeting.
- Ms. Lester mentioned that the bioventing tank was completed but wasn't sure if the Navy ever put any dirt in it. Ms. Lester also asked how much product is being recovered from wells at Fuel Farm 4.
 - Ms. Bennett explained that last time she looked they were only getting a trace amount from the wells. There was greater than 2 inches in one well but it was not recoverable. At Building 491, Well 113 historically had free product in it but recently it wasn't measurable. A slight sheen was observed during sampling this well.
- Ms. Lester also asked if anything is being done to recover product in Area 52. Was that site moved to the Petroleum Program or is it still part of the CERCLA program?

- Ms. Bennett stated Area 52 is in the CERCLA program. Ms. Himes explained that Area 52 currently does not have groundwater monitoring and that there are only LUCs at this time.

Part 5 PFAS Update

- Ms. Clubb reviewed work conducted as part of the Drinking Water Program since the last RAB meeting including:
 - The Navy conducted the biannual drinking water sampling event in wells that have PFAS exceedances of the EPA lifetime health advisory (LHA), as well as any other detections of PFAS, and wells that are adjacent to homes with exceedances in order to monitor the movement of PFAS in those areas.
 - One additional well was identified during sampling with a PFAS exceedance and bottled water was provided to the residence. The residence has been wrapped into the long-term solution evaluation for homes in this area.
 - The Navy will continue to provide bottled water or a point-of-use treatment to homes with PFOS/PFOA exceedances. Currently, there are a total of 36 homes.
 - The Navy is continuing to implement the long-term solution for Coupeville. Two of the three segments of the new water main have been completed and seven of 10 service line connections have been completed as of March 2020. The PFAS water treatment plant for Coupeville was completed in January 2021 and a Draft Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Manual has been developed. The Navy also initiated the Cooperative Agreement with the town of Coupeville for the O&M of the PFAS treatment plant. The design for the last segment of water main associated with the long-term solution is near completion. Photos of the progress were shown in the presentation.
 - The Navy has also been evaluating the long-term solution in Oak Harbor. Three possible solutions for impacted drinking water wells include a new drinking water well, point-of-entry treatment, and a connection to the Navy or public water supply. The Engineering Evaluation Cost Analysis was completed in November/December 2019 which evaluated the three long-term solutions. In July/August 2020, the action memorandum for the long-term solution was finalized. Public comment periods for these two documents are over. A design and construction contract task order was awarded in September 2020. Work plans and design documents are in progress.
- Ms. Clubb reviewed work planned as part of the Drinking Water Program before the next RAB meeting:
 - The next drinking water biannual sampling event is planned for fall 2021.
 - The Navy will award the Cooperative Agreement to the Town of Coupeville for the O&M of the PFAS treatment plant and finalize the O&M Manual for the PFAS treatment plant.
 - The Navy will complete the revised design for the last segment of the new water main in Coupeville. A new task order will be awarded for this work and work plans will be developed and construction is planned to begin in 2022.
 - For Oak Harbor, the Navy expects to finalize the work plans and design of the long-term solution with construction beginning in summer 2021.

RAB members had the following questions:

- Mr. Grogan just wanted to give kudos to the Navy team and is very appreciative of all of the meetings.
 - Ms. Clubb also thanked Mr. Grogan for his work and looks forward to continuing to work with him.
- Ms. Clubb reviewed groundwater investigation work conducted since the last RAB meeting including:
 - The preliminary assessment (PA) (completed before the last RAB meeting) at Ault Field, Seaplane Base, and OLF Coupeville was completed in 2018. It included a comprehensive records search and interviews to determine where known or potential releases of PFAS occurred. If areas were identified in the PA, then the areas proceed to a Site Inspection (SI). The SI determines the presence or absence of PFAS through sampling soil and groundwater in an area of interest. If PFAS was identified above risk-based levels, then a remedial investigation (RI) is conducted. An RI consists of delineating PFAS and conducting a risk assessment. The science of PFAS is continuing to evolve so the Navy is only using EPA-vetted risk screening levels for PFOS, PFOA, and PFBS in soil and groundwater.
 - The Navy completed the work plans and the field work for the Phase 2 Ault Field SI. The report is pending for this work. At Area 31, the work plans for the PFAS RI are being developed. The Ault Field SI has been conducted in phases. The areas investigated were the current firefighting training area, Areas 2 and 3, Area 31, and Area 6. The current firefighting training area, Area 31, and Area 6 are proceeding to the RI. Phase 2 of the SI focused on the other 31 areas identified during the PA. The field work is complete, and the report is pending. The number of sites proceeding to the RI will be finalized in the report.
 - At Seaplane Base, the work plans and field work for the SI have been completed. Three areas investigated were Building 18, the sanitary wastewater treatment plant, and biosolids land application area.
 - Similarly to Ault Field, the Navy conducted the OLF Coupeville SI in phases. Phases 1 and 2 of the SI are complete. During Phase 1 and 2, the Navy installed 31 monitoring wells, of which six exceeded the PFOS and/or PFOA screening levels. Four wells were close to the western property line, one near the runway, and one near the fire truck garage. During Phase 2, the Navy conducted an aquifer test on the wells near the western property line to demonstrate that the Town of Coupeville's primary drinking water well is hydraulically connected to the monitoring wells near the western property line that exceeded screening levels. This information was necessary to provide justification for the Navy to install PFAS treatment on the Town's existing water treatment plant. Phase 3 of the SI included a source investigation, a data gap collection, a groundwater model update, and a transport model for PFAS. The report is pending and will be presented at the next RAB meeting.
 - The Navy has drafted the work plans for the PFAS RI at OLF Coupeville. The RI will include on-base and off-base delineation of PFOS, PFOA, and PFBS, as well as necessary risk evaluations. The field work for the RI is planned in winter 2021/2022.

- Ms. Clubb reviewed work planned for the groundwater investigations before the next RAB meeting including:
 - Finalize the report for Ault Field Phase 2 SI.
 - Finalize Area 31 RI work plans.
 - Award the task order for the current fire training area RI and Area 6 Landfill RI.
 - Draft the report for the Seaplane SI.
 - Finalize the OLF Coupeville Supplemental SI and addendum report.
 - Finalize the OLF Coupeville RI work plans.
 - Complete the PFAS evaluation/PAs for Boardman Range, Racon Hill, Lake Hancock and Coos Head/Bay.
- Ms. Clubb reviewed PFAS related information on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA):
 - NDAA is a series of laws specifying the annual budget and expenditures of the Department of Defense (DoD). Specifically, Section 335 of the 2021 NDAA requires the DoD to notify agricultural operations within 1 mile downgradient of DoD installations with confirmed PFAS release, which includes groundwater data that exceeds the EPA's LHA for PFOS and PFOA and EPA's regional screening levels for PFBS. The U.S. Department of Agriculture identified all the necessary operations that required notification and provided those addresses to the DoD. The Navy received 73 addresses for Whidbey Island and processed 73 letters. 50 of the letters were near Ault Field and Area 6 and 23 letters were near OLF Coupeville.

RAB members had no questions on the PFAS groundwater investigations.

Part 6 Miscellaneous Discussion Items

- Ms. Clubb opened the discussion for any members of the community.
 - Mr. Kelly asked if it would be possible to view a typical letter to an agricultural operator.
 - Ms. Clubb indicated that the Navy has a template letter that can be provided.
 - Mr. Kelly indicated that the goal for UST sites is NFA and unrestricted access. Is a similar plan in place for the Lake Hancock site?
 - Mr. Generous explained that the Navy is currently in the process of cleaning the sites and there are restrictions in place. Mr. Generous does not think there are long-term plans to open the site up, at least within the confines of what the Navy is trying to accomplish. But that doesn't mean things can't change. It is still an open training range so it likely won't change for a long time. There could be change in land use way down the road.
 - Mr. Williams made a comment that the lack of concern indicates PFAS concerns that were raising all kinds of concerns were pretty well mollified which is a good thing.
 - Ms. Clubb appreciates the kind words and indicated that the Navy will continue to do what they are doing and if any concerns come up, they will address them as they do.

Part 7 RAB Vote and Action Items

- Ms. Gehrman indicated an application for Mr. Doug Kelly was received requesting to join the RAB. Ms. Gehrman asked Mr. Kelly to introduce himself.
- Mr. Kelly explained that he is a very recently retired hydrogeologist and worked for a little over 20 years for Island County. Prior to that he initially worked for the Illinois State Water Survey in Champaign, Illinois in the Office of Groundwater Contamination and Quality for seven years. Then he worked for five years for Science Applications International Corporation doing environmental work, some of which was “Navy” CLEAN (Comprehensive Long-Term Environmental Action Navy) work mostly over at Naval Base Kitsap Bangor. Then he worked for Island County for several years and then worked for a company called Pacific Groundwater Group out of Seattle for about four years and then came back to the County for another 12 years. Mr. Kelly is invested in the conversation about PFAS, not only with the Navy but in general because he believes it’s going to end up being something bigger than what’s going on with the Navy, in the long term. So that is why Mr. Kelly decided to keep his nose in what is going on.
- Ms. Rose asked who Mr. Kelly’s replacement is for Island County and Mr. Kelly indicated that that has yet to be accomplished.
- Ms. Gehrman then asked the RAB members to vote in favor of approving Mr. Kelly as a new member. There were no nays so Mr. Kelly was approved as a new member.
- Ms. Gehrman then moved to community co-chair nominations and votes. Ms. Gehrman stated that there are three nominees including Mr. Doug Kelly, Mr. Gary Winlund, and Mr. Joseph Grogan.
- Mr. Grogan asked if Mr. Kelly was a volunteer or if someone volunteered him. Mr. Grogan removed himself as a nominee.
- Ms. Gehrman thanked Ms. Lester who served as Community Co-Chair for many years. The Navy appreciates all of the time and dedication Ms. Lester gave to the RAB over the years. Captain Arny also stated that he appreciates everything Ms. Lester has done for the community and for the base. Captain Arny has really enjoyed their interactions at the old fashioned in-person RAB meetings and wishes Ms. Lester the best on behalf of the Navy.
- The results of the co-chair votes were five votes for Mr. Kelly and there were enough votes for a quorum. Mr. Kelly is the new community co-chair for the RAB.
- Ms. Gehrman indicated that the next RAB meeting will be held in the fall but the Navy does not know at this time whether it will be virtual or in person.
- Captain Arny concluded by thanking Mr. Kelly for his volunteerism and passion for the community, to help the community, to help the Navy, as a team, to continue to work through these important efforts. Captain Arny thanked the Navy RPMs for the great information on the updates and appreciates the questions. Captain Arny looks forward to continuing this program, whether it be in person or virtual.

Review of Action Items:

1. Ms. Rose reminded the Navy to provide the letter for the farmers.

The next RAB will be in Fall 2021 – Date to be determined.

The meeting adjourned at 6:43 pm.