

MEETING MINUTES
Restoration Advisory Board (RAB)
For the Environmental Restoration and Munitions Response Program in
Vieques, Puerto Rico
Meeting Number 11 - March 29, 2007

Note: These minutes are a summary based on informal notes taken at the meeting. They are not intended as a verbatim transcript and everything that was discussed may not have captured. If comments or additional notes are provided by others who were present at the meeting, within 30 days of distribution of these minutes, those will be added as an attachment to these minutes.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOMING REMARKS

The meeting began at 5:25 pm with welcoming and introductions of those present by Susana Struve (CH2M HILL). She announced that the Administration Record has been established on a computer loaned to the electronic library in Isabel Segunda. The next flyer will include information about this.

Kevin Cloe of the Navy gave a presentation about the Navy's progress on cleaning up the munitions in the Live Impact Area. The surface of 326 acres at the former LIA has been cleared of munitions. He also provided the status of the environmental investigations and the tentative schedule for the delivery of reports.

Wilmarie Rivera from PREQB gave a presentation about the agency activities from January to March 2007. She discussed the conversations with the Navy about the request from the governor of Puerto Rico to install an air monitoring station closer to the community. The location was agreed to between PREQB and the Navy will be installed within two weeks.

Discussion Points

Jorge Fernandez Porto (RAB Member) - Is this location the same where the Navy had an observation tower before?

Madeline Rivera (Navy) - It is the same location, which is near Mount Carmelo.

Note: The air monitoring station is located about 400 feet from the former tower location to prevent vandalism.

Wilmarie also mentioned that the EQB Governing board signed a resolution on February 28, 2007 to approve the no further action for nine sites on the west side of Vieques. The groundwater remains as an outstanding issue that needs to be further discussed between the Navy and PREQB. EQB offered the community a meeting in the near future to discuss

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the resolution. Eugene Scott from the Governing Board is available to meet with people to discuss the resolution. Copies of the Resolution were distributed

Danny Rodriguez from EPA presented their office oversight activities since the last RAB meeting. He showed photographs of the sampling collection and well installation at SWMU 4 (West Vieques). The Navy collected 31 subsurface samples, 36 surface samples, 10 wells for a total of 17 wells at the site now, 5 surface water samples, and 20 sediment samples. An ecological survey was done at SWMU 4. The Navy communicated to EPA that two background well locations were difficult to access and based on their discussion these wells were relocated outside the SWMU 4 arc.

He also showed photographs of the demolition event on March 2, 2007. He said he got copies of the demolition sheets and verified that the Navy contractors do not exceeded the limit of 1000 lbs of net explosive weigh (NEW). On this occasion there were 36 items to be detonated on five shots. None of these shoots exceeded the limit. He showed photographs of a detonation plume, which dissipated in less than 3 minutes. He also observed NAEVA doing geophysics mapping, and also evaluated the operations at the processing of the scrap metal at the CPC on another occasion.

A summary of documents under review by EPA was presented.

Jorge Fernandez Porto - Where was that detonation?

Danny Rodriguez (EPA) - Southeast of Bahia Del Sur.

Stacie Notine (RAB Member) - How do they determine if an item doesn't have explosives?

Danny Rodriguez - The contractors UXO experts do this by a visual inspection.

Stacie Notine - Are those things in the CPC only scrap?

Danny Rodriguez - Yes, they are. The explosive free certified scrap is loaded in trailers, sealed and transported out of Vieques.

Stacie Notine - To what depth were the beaches cleaned? Does the machine go to 50 ft?

John Tomik (CH2M HILL) - The equipment has limitations. The Navy excavated to a depth of 2 ft for all anomalies detected because the navy didn't expect to find any explosives at these beaches. In addition, certain anomalies were excavated to a depth of 4 ft. Because the results of the clearance activities did not identify any explosive items it was agreed with the regulators that there was no need to dig any deeper for the anomalies.

Community member - A map from the EPA website shows SWMU 4 at the east side?

Kevin Cloe (Navy) - There is another SWMU 4 on the east site, I am sorry for the confusion.

Hector Julian Camacho (RAB Member) - What the revenues from the recycling of scrap will be used on?

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Kevin Cloe - The revenues will go back to the project. We are not really receiving any revenues but a discount in transportation.

Danny Rodriguez - The number of processed scrap is at different phases, but not all has been shipped out.

Hector Julian Camacho - Will an underwater survey be done?

John Tomik - Right now it is not in the scheduled work.

Hector Julian Camacho - The reason I am asking is because I don't want people to have to false sense of security

Stacie Notine - Is there an agreement with the Agencies on how deep the munitions areas will be cleaned?

John Tomik - The clean up will be based on the land use.

Danny Rodriguez - There are areas where it was not expected to find munitions, but because the beaches are energetic, things can moved. If you find an item please do not take action. The Navy has experts and also the Puerto Rico police know how to respond.

II. Munitions Response Program - John Tomik gave a presentation about the progress of the Munitions Response Program (MRP) and air monitoring efforts. Based on the results of air monitoring and air modeling, air emissions from BIP detonations do not likely have a negative impact on the ambient air quality in or around the populated areas of Vieques. The additional air monitoring station close to the community should verify this conclusion. He also mentioned that an archeological survey was recently completed.

John Tomik also indicated that a controlled burn variance application has been submitted to the regulators for review. The purpose of the controlled burning is to increase the safety of the workers by more effectively removing the vegetation. The application includes a controlled burn plan and a plan for additional air monitoring to monitor potential impacts from the controlled burning.

Discussion Points

Lirio Marquez (RAB Member) - The Biological Assessment has been loaded into the website but not the archeological survey.

John Tomik - The survey was just completed last week, when the data and the report is finalized they will then be loaded to the website.

Stacie Notine -Who is in charge of developing the criteria for the air monitoring and modeling?

John Tomik - It has been a collaborative effort among the agencies. We agreed on the model input parameters- the type of vegetation, and types of munitions. It was done on specific

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areas of the Live Impact Area to assess air impacts. The modeling predicts where the contamination might go.

Stacie Notine - How can you stop an uncontrolled fire?

John Tomik - The roads are cleared of vegetation and used as fire breaks/barriers. Also the large water filled lagoon in the Live Impact Area will further prevent the migration of fire from the Live Impact Area. The former strafing road is also used to stop fires spreading to the west.

Danny Rodriguez - 850 acres is what is left at the former LIA and these presents a high risk because they contain sub munitions. They need to burn at these 850 acres.

Community member working for Navy contractor - There are three barriers to stop uncontrolled fires. We are trained but we should not send people to these high risk areas when we can use other means like controlled burn to avoid that.

Jorge Fernandez - Is the navy going to bring the employees to discuss the points because if that is the case it will be a problem?

Jorge Fernandez - Will you be doing geophysical mapping on others areas besides beaches and roads?

John Tomik - It depends on the land use plan that is currently being developed by FWS.

Jorge Fernandez - What's the depth the metal detectors can achieve?

John Tomik - It depends on the size of the munitions items.

Kevin Cloe - There is a large group here and not all will agree. Everyone has the right to be here and express their opinion. We should respect that.

Jorge Fernandez - I don't have a problem. My problem is that the questions are being answered by the employees not the Navy.

Madeline Rivera of the Navy gave a presentation about the warning buoys and safety issues. The buoys were donated by the Coast Guard; therefore they are different shapes and sizes. We will install them in different locations around the waters of the former Live Impact Area. A survey was done to ensure coral is not present in the chosen locations. The buoys will be installed in sandy bottoms.

People continue visiting the range even when signs are posted, hopeful the buoys will warn boaters not to enter the area.

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