

Vieques Investigation and Cleanup
Navy Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Atlantic
RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Number 30

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., August 17th, 2011 – Ice House, Vieques

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees:

Mike Barandiaran – USFWS	John Carriger – EPA- visitor
Kevin Cloe – Navy	Brett Doerr- CH2M HILL
Rich Henry – USFWS	Daniel Hood - Navy
Felix Lopez – USFWS	Colleen MacNamara – RAB member
Stacie Notine – RAB member	Luz Quinones -- community member
Daniel Ramos – USA Environmental	Madeline Rivera - Navy
Wilmarie Rivera – EQB	Francheska Ruiz - community member
Pedro Ruiz – Navy	Lionell Sanchez – RAB member
Donald Shaw – USA Environmental	Susana Struve – CH2M HILL
Carlos Ventura – community member	Claudio Vera – CH2M HILL
Dan Waddill – Navy	Dianne Wehner - NOAA

1. Welcome and Introductions - Kevin Cloe/Navy Co-chair

The meeting began at 7:05 PM. Kevin Cloe (Navy) welcomed those present and proceeded to describe the agenda for the meeting. He also introduced Daniel Ramos, the new site manager of USA Environmental.

Susana Struve informed the public that there are simultaneous translation devices at the back of the room and a list on which people can write their names and contact numbers in case they are interested in getting added to the mailing list.

2. Environmental Quality Board (EQB) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Oversight Activities – Wilmarie Rivera (EQB) and Daniel Rodriguez (EPA)

Wilmarie Rivera gave a brief update on the activities of the EQB, mainly emphasizing their participation at the subcommittee meeting held in New York and the site visit to UXO 15 the day before this RAB meeting.

Daniel Rodriguez (EPA) announced that on September 1st, 2011 there will be a free forum about sustainable agriculture in Vieques, and he invited all community members to participate.

3. **Fish and Wildlife Update (Rich Henry and Mike Barandarian/ FWS).**

Rich Henry talked about the UXO 15 site visit from the day before. He discussed the various habitats and types of vegetation found at the site ranging from invasive species without significant ecological value to native vegetation (such as the dry dwarf forest) with high ecological value.

Mike Barandarian explained that work has just begun in UXO 15 and different methodologies will be used depending on the type of habitat and the risk of munitions at each location. The vegetation clearing work will be done paying attention to the habitat characteristics, it will be coordinated between the agencies, and the community will be kept informed.

- Colleen MacNamara, RAB member, said she is very grateful for the effort that all agencies have put forth to work together, especially for how FWS has worked with them to address ecologically important habitats and the balance between protecting habitat and mitigating explosive risk. She thanked the Navy for the opportunity to visit UXO 15 and allowing the RAB members to see the different types of vegetation on this site. The RAB is looking forward to receiving the revised UXO 15 work plan that includes what areas will be cleared of vegetation versus what areas will be protected.

4. **VW SWMU 6 Post-Removal Supplemental Confirmation Sampling Results – Brett Doerr (See presentation for more details).**

Brett gave a brief summary of the activities performed at SWMU 6 and showed figures and pictures that demonstrated the sampling activities and the pre-removal (terrestrial) and post-removal (lagoon) conditions at the site. He also presented figures showing the locations of the site and background surface water and sediment samples.

He reported on the number of additional confirmatory samples and background samples collected and the analysis performed.

- One RAB member asked why the Navy did not analyze for explosives or perchlorate. Brett explained that this site is located on the western side of the island and was used for general trash disposal, not munitions-related activities.

Brett explained the results of the soil, sediment and surface water samples in comparison with the risk-based criteria. The site presents a potentially unacceptable risk for people who swim in the lagoon or eat fish from the lagoon,

as well as for the aquatic animals living in the lagoon or those animals that feed in it. Brett explained that the risk analysis is based on very conservative assumptions and that these assumptions very often overestimate actual risk.

- A RAB member asked if the timing was considered when surface water and groundwater samples were collected from the lagoon.

Brett affirmed that surface water, groundwater and sediment samples were collected in February 2011.

5. Eastern Conservation Area Remedial Investigation Preliminary Results - Brett Doerr (See presentation for more details).

Brett showed the location of the Eastern Conservation Area (ECA) and described the investigation approach. He stated that the field teams collected 27 multi-incremental samples of surface soil, 24 subsurface soil samples, 5 surface water sample and 15 sediment samples. All samples were analyzed for perchlorate, explosives, and metals (inorganics). Brett described the increment sampler and slide hammer that were used to collect surface soil and subsurface soil samples, respectively.

The analytical results indicated that no explosive detections were above risk-based screening levels in any soil samples. There were no explosive detections in surface water and sediment samples.

The sampling results indicated that the only inorganic observed consistently above east Vieques background levels was arsenic. It was concluded that due to its uniform distribution throughout the site (along with the fact that arsenic is not commonly associated with munitions), the arsenic concentrations across the ECA are likely associated with localized background levels.

Brett ended the session indicating that the next step will be to use the data to conduct human health and ecological risk assessments which will be documented in a Remedial Investigation Report.

Closing

Madeline Rivera from the Navy informed that on October 20th, 2011 an environmental fair will take place in the public square of Vieques. This fair will have the participation of several locals, state, federal agencies, and NGOs from the Island.

Susana Struve thanked the attendees. The meeting ended at 9:05 PM.