



Vieques Investigation and Cleanup

Navy Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Atlantic

RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD (RAB)

Meeting Number 33

6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., June 12, 2012 – Lighthouse, Vieques

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees:

Mike Barandiarán (USFWS)	Lirio Márquez (RAB member)
Anita Braddock (community member)	Edwin Muñiz (USFWS)
Gerald Braddock (USAE)	Daniel Rodríguez (EPA)
Brett Doerr (CH2M HILL)	Madeline Rivera (Navy)
Jorge Fernández Porto (RAB member)	Wilmarie Rivera (EQB)
Mike Green (Navy)	Pedro Ruiz (Navy)
Rich Henry (USFWS)	Donald Shaw (USA Environmental)
Lorraine Jameson (CH2M HILL)	Susan Silander (USFWS)
Félix López (USFWS)	Susana Struve (CH2M HILL)
	Dan Waddill (Navy)

1. Welcome and Introductions – Dan Waddill/Navy

The meeting began at 6:30 PM. Dan Waddill welcomed participants and described the agenda for the meeting. Susana Struve/CH2M HILL informed the public that there were simultaneous translation devices at the back of the room and a list on which people can write their names and contact numbers if they want to be added to the mailing list.

2. Program Overview/Dan Waddill

East Vieques: Dan Waddill provided meeting attendees with an overview of the status of East Vieques Sites. Dan reported that there has been a lot of steady progress on East Vieques sites and work will continue for the foreseeable future. The Navy is gearing up in the next one-to-two years to begin underwater assessments and follow up with investigations required under the CERCLA process.

West Vieques: Dan Waddill provided meeting attendees with an overview of the status of West Vieques Sites. Key concerns for future work will be an evaluation of the lagoon created during cleanup activities at SWMU 6 where there continues to be a risk from consumption of fish and crabs, and UXO-16, an underwater potential munitions site.

3. Tentative Documents for RAB Review/Dan Waddill

Dan Waddill described documents the Navy hopes to produce for review by RAB members and regulators through the end of calendar 2012. He pointed out that the schedule for document review and finalization depends on a number of factors including what is found during site investigations and the amount of time needed to address comments from regulators. Document review is a part of the CERCLA process and enables stakeholders to have a voice in the process.

4. Tentative 2012 Field Work Schedule/Dan Waddill

Dan Waddill outlined field work anticipated for East and West Vieques through the end of calendar year 2012.

East Vieques:

- A drilling contract has been awarded for the installation of 23 wells for an evaluation of regional groundwater. Samples from the wells will be analyzed to show what chemicals are present in the groundwater and where the groundwater is going.
- The remedy for SWMU 1 is an environmentally friendly, "green" remedy. No heavy equipment is required, and much of the vegetation remains. The remedy only calls for addressing some areas of the former landfill that need additional cover.
- An ongoing Non Time Critical Removal Action (NTCRA) for surface and subsurface removal of munitions.

West Vieques:

- AOC I Pilot Study Groundwater Sampling
- An ongoing NTCRA for surface and subsurface removal of munitions

- **Question from Lirio Márquez/RAB Member:** What soil will be used for implementing the SWMU 1 remedy?

Answer provided by Brett Doerr/CH2M HILL: Proposal is to use the soil generated by the construction of the Visitors Center at the entrance of the Wildlife Refuge. This needs to be discussed with the regulators.

- **Question from Jorge Fernández Porto/RAB Member:** Did the Navy consider using components of the remedy to provide sustainable energy?

Answer provided by Brett Doerr and Dan Waddill: Yes, this approach was considered, but the current remedy selected for SWMU 1 made more sense for this site. Sustainable energy options may be more suited to another site.

- **Comment from Jorge Fernández Porto:** The RAB and other stakeholders should begin discussions about Land Use Controls (LUCs) that will be considered for sites. Cultural

considerations, community growth, and less enforcement/ vigilance in the future at sites now under study must be considered. He suggested engaging other projects and facilities that have implemented LUCs.

Dan Waddill asked if a workshop, similar to a previous workshop on risk assessment, might be a good approach. Jorge Porto said it would, but attendance should be broadened to include stakeholders in addition to RAB members.

Rich Henry/USFWS pointed out that LUCs are only a portion of a remedy, and it's important to study the entire process of remedy selection.

Madeline Rivera/Navy said the Navy has guidance on implementing LUCs. Dan Waddill said the Navy maintains a database to track LUCs and monitor them for continued effectiveness.

- **ACTION ITEM:** Planning will begin for a workshop on LUCs. Rich Henry will provide information from a USFWS database on Land Use Controls at various sites around the country.

5. Tentative 2012 Field Work Schedule – West Vieques/Dan Waddill

Dan Waddill outlined field work anticipated for West Vieques through the end of calendar year 2012. He said that implementation of remedies for SWMUs 4 and 6 will signal completion of cleanup on West Vieques, although long-term monitoring will continue. For UXO-16 later in July, Navy divers will begin underwater investigation using swimming transects and metal detectors. This is a good training opportunity for the divers who can provide data for use by site contractors.

6. Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Environmental Award/Dan Waddill

Dan Waddill announced that the Vieques Program Team had won a 2011 CNO Environmental Award. He thanked everyone involved including EPA, EQB, USFWS, the RAB and other public stakeholders.

7. Mike Diaz Remembrance/Jorge Fernández Porto

Jorge Fernández Porto led meeting attendees in a moment of silence for the passing of RAB member Mike Diaz. He described him as a great friend and member of the community. An “adopted Viequense with a New York accent”, he was one of the original members of the Technical Review Committee and a consistent participant in RAB activities. Jorge pointed out that Mike trusted that the Navy knew what to do to take care of the bombs; his real interest was in the process to address environmental issues.

8. Regulatory Agencies Update – Wilmarie Rivera/EQB, Danny Rodriguez/EPA

Lirio Márquez commented that she had heard that a compromise had been reached among the regulatory agencies on the Controlled Burn Plan. Wilmarie Rivera/EQB and Danny Rodriguez/EPA had not heard about a compromise. Dan Waddill and Jorge Fernández Porto both commented that

most people knowledgeable about the cleanup believe a decision will not be made until after the elections in November.

Dad Waddill discussed the status of four of the objectives of the Vieques Sustainability Task Force:

1. The Controlled Burn Plan is on hold.
2. Due to the presence of endangered species and sensitive habitats, the National Marine Fisheries Service is performing a Biological Opinion as part of preparation for construction of a floating marine barrier at Bahia Icacos.
3. Ensure the early involvement of the RAB in site work. This objective has been met.
4. Plans are in place to begin underwater munitions investigations.

9. Refuge-related Activities Update - Rich Henry/USFWS and Mike Barandiaran /USFWS

Rich Henry introduced USFWS team members Susan Silander, Edwin Muñiz, Felix Lopez, and Mike Barandiaran. Mike Barandiaran said the structure for the plant nursery is complete and construction of the irrigation system is underway. The facility should be up and running by July 2012. Native seeds have been planted, and USFWS will continue developing the greenhouse. Plans also are continuing for a secondary greenhouse for native plants to be used for restoration of the Refuge.

10. Other Business

The group began discussing scheduling the next RAB meeting, the public hearing for SWMU 4, and the Land Use Controls Workshop. A number of options were introduced, but no decision was made at the meeting.

- **ACTION:** Susana Struve will compile the various options in an email and forward it to meeting participants for further discussion.

Closing

Susana Struve thanked the attendees. The meeting ended at 8:00 PM.