



**Vieques Investigation and Cleanup
Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Atlantic**

RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD (RAB)

Meeting Number 53

6:00 p.m. – 8:40 p.m. | May 10, 2017 | Punta Mulas Lighthouse, Vieques, PR

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees:

Dan Waddill – Ex-Officio RAB Member, NAVFAC Atlantic	Brett Doerr – CH2M
Kevin Cloe – Ex-Officio RAB Member, NAVFAC Atlantic	Madeline Almodovar – CH2M
Madeline Rivera – NAVFAC Atlantic	Daniel G. Concepción – CH2M
James Brantley – NAVFAC Atlantic	Don Shaw – USAE
Daniel Rodríguez – Ex-Officio RAB Member, USEPA Region 2	Stacie Notine – Community RAB Member
Angela Carpenter – USEPA Region 2	Doug McHoul – Community Member
Diane Wehner – NOAA	José Gomez – Community Member
Mike Barandiarán – Ex-Officio RAB member, USFWS	

These minutes represent a summary of the meeting presentations, comments, questions, and action items and are not a verbatim transcript of the meeting.

Topics Discussed:

Opening and Introductions

Madeline Almodovar (CH2M/Facilitator)	Meeting began at 6:00 p.m. Participants were welcomed to the 53 rd RAB meeting and guided through a series of posters highlighting different aspects of the Vieques Environmental Restoration Program. Representatives from the Navy, USEPA, USFWS and NOAA were available to answer questions. The second part of the meeting included a presentation providing updates on the Submunitions Area clearance operations and an informal question and answer session.
Dan Waddill (Navy Program Manager) Kevin Cloe (Navy Project Manager)	Navy and regulatory agency representatives greeted the attendees, provided information and answered questions posed by RAB and community members. Each poster was also available to the attendees as a handout. A summary of the discussions is provided below.

<p>Madeline Rivera (Navy Site Manager)</p> <p>Brett Doerr (CH2M Project Manager)</p> <p>Mike Barandiarán (Vieques Wildlife Refuge Manager, USFWS)</p> <p>Angela Carpenter (USEPA Region 2)</p> <p>Daniel Rodríguez (USEPA Region 2)</p> <p>Diane Wehner (NOAA)</p>	
Status of Vieques Installation Restoration Sites	
<p>Kevin Cloe (Navy)/ Brett Doerr (CH2M)</p>	<p>Brett Doerr (CH2M) described the work that is being performed at the Installation Restoration Program (IRP) sites located on west and east Vieques. The sites included: AOC E, SWMU 6, SWMU 1 and SWMU 20. The poster included CERCLA timelines with projected timeframes for the completion of each CERCLA stage. A map with an aerial image of Vieques showed the site locations and photographs showed the work performed on each IR site.</p>
<p>Community Feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doug McHoul (community member) asked about the progress on the Submunitions Area on east Vieques. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kevin Cloe (Navy) explained that the Navy is currently performing cleanup activities with the assistance of a remotely operated excavator. The magnet attachment is used first to pick up any large metallic items, then a brush cutter attachment cuts the vegetation to a manageable height, and lastly another attachment is used to rake the vegetation into a pile, which is then burned in a controlled manner so workers can safely find and remove the submunitions from the ground surface. He added that the RAB meeting will feature a slide-show presentation presenting details of the activities taking place within the Submunitions Area.
Underwater and Beaches Investigation Status Update	
<p>Kevin Cloe (Navy)</p>	<p>Kevin Cloe provided information on the status of the underwater investigations, as well as the status of the Beach Dynamics Study. The investigations update included the UXO 16 Wide Area Assessment and Remedial Investigation offshore of SWMU 4. The Beach Dynamics Study information included how the sea currents, tides, and sand movement relate to the migration of underwater munitions and how this information will be considered in the investigation and cleanup activities.</p> <p>A map of Vieques showed the location where underwater investigations are taking place. Several representative pictures showed the underwater and Beach Dynamics investigations.</p>

Community Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doug McHoul (community member) asked about the status of the public comments for the Proposed Plan for Cayo La Chiva. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dan Waddill (Navy) explained that during a previous RAB meeting a non-profit group had presented information and comments regarding the land use plan for Cayo La Chiva. Dan added that Cayo La Chiva’s land manager, DNER, will respond to those comments after which the Record of Decision will be prepared.
Status of Vieques Munitions Response Sites	
Brett Doerr (CH2M)	Brett presented a summary of the Munitions Response Program (MRP) investigations including the planned and upcoming work. The poster included pictures showing sampling and cleanup activities with a written description of each site location. A Vieques map showed the relative location of the sites, approximate areas, and site status.
Community Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • José Gomez (Community Member) asked what was the complexity of dealing with submunitions and why controlled burning was needed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Brett briefly explained the dangers of submunitions and the particularity that they are easily hidden within brush and other vegetation, hence the need for performing a controlled burn of the vegetation so that UXO workers could then safely find and remove the submunitions.
Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) Process	
Madeline Rivera (Navy)	The poster included a flowchart of the process and described each type of documentation generated for review by the regulatory agencies and the public. She highlighted the steps in which the public can provide direct input in the decision-making process, like submitting comments on PRAPs.
Submunitions Area Cleanup Update Presentation	
Dan Waddill (Navy)	Dan provided an update on the Submunitions area clearance operation in the 75-acre area located within the eastern part of Vieques that has been identified as containing a large concentration of highly dangerous small munitions called submunitions. Dan provided background on the dangers and risks posed by submunitions and highlighted why it is important for the Navy to continue clearing this area of submunitions. The presentation included a description of the controlled burning process, necessary since the submunitions are easily hidden within vegetation. He emphasized that the Navy is using remotely operated excavator to safely perform vegetation cutting and prepare the land for the controlled burning events, which then make it safe for the workers to find and remove the submunitions from the ground surface.
Community Feedback/ Question and Answer Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A member of the public asked about the estimated time for completion for the Submunitions Area at the current rate of progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dan Waddill responded that the Navy has been able to make progress through the Submunitions area while operating in a safe manner for the workers and safeguarding the public. He estimated that if progress remains relatively consistent, they expect to complete the work in 3 years. • Stacie Notine (Community RAB Member) asked about the types of technologies being used to assist UXO workers in finding UXO on soil surface and subsurface.

- Don Shaw (USAE, Navy contractor)- explained the different technologies and their applications during the field activities. Don explained the use of magnetometers for initial detection of underground ferrous metals and Time-domain Electromagnetic Multi-sensor Towed Array Detection System (TEMTADS) for advanced detection and discerning of ferrous UXO material versus scrap metal. The discussion included the applications for each type of equipment within the cleanup program, including their advantages and limitations.
- A member of the public asked how the controlled burning process affects the air quality results.
 - Dan Waddill (Navy) presented air quality monitoring results from measurements performed previous, during and after the controlled burning events showing that the burn events do not affect local air quality. He also showed plots of the results from each of the air quality monitors and explained that in all cases, the readings were well below the National Ambient Air Quality Standard for particulate matter 10 microns or less in size (PM10), particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in size (PM2.5), and carbon monoxide. He also stated no explosives have ever been detected in the air monitoring samples and that most metals are not detected and those that are, are orders of magnitude below health-based levels.
- Stacie Notine asked about the stages in which the public can provide comments on documents under CERCLA. She also asked how the Navy notifies the instances in which documents are open for public comment and what tools are used for the notifications.
 - Madeline Rivera (Navy) explained the different stages in which public participation is formally solicited, for example through gathering public comments on a Proposed Remedial Action Plan (PRAP), but that public participation is encouraged throughout the cleanup process, such as actively participating in RAB meetings. She also added that the Navy works continuously with the regulatory agencies to review cleanup actions and documents. The Navy encourages public participation through various tools, including newsletters and flyers mailed to the community and other stakeholders via regular mail and email; by advertising using a megaphone truck; by publishing public notices in the newspaper for documents under public review; and through the Facebook page.

Regulatory Agencies Update

Daniel Rodríguez, EPA Region 2

Daniel Rodríguez (EPA) stated that EPA will notify the public about the comment period for the Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) for a Non-Time Critical Removal Action (NTCRA) for nearshore munitions in the waters around Vieques referred to as UXO 16. He added that EPA will continue reviewing work plans submitted by the Navy for all sites.

Community Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stacie Notine asked if the agency is reviewing data regarding controlled burning operations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Daniel Rodriguez responded that the Navy has presented the air quality monitoring data to the EPA and other regulatory agencies. He added that technical meetings discussions have included air quality monitoring equipment, selection of compounds for monitoring, location of air monitoring stations, as well as sampling results.
Mike Barandiarán, USFWS	Mike Barandiarán thanked the audience for attending and added that USFWS is mainly working toward providing training and licensing to permit holders and applicants for the upcoming land crabbing season. USFWS is also working toward repairing access roads to recreational areas to ensure Vieques community access.
Community Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stacie Notine (RAB Community Member) asked about the turnout of the community for the USFWS trainings/permits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mike stated that more than a dozen land crabbing licenses have been issued and that various members of the public, both hobbyists and professional fishermen, have applied for them. Mike gave a brief summary of what the process entails and how the biologists calculate the safe level of quotas for a healthy population. He added that USFWS will enforce the quotas for safe harvesting of crabs to ensure a healthy population of animals across the Vieques Wildlife Refuge.
Adjournment	
Madeline Almodovar	All participants and presenters were thanked for attending the meeting, which was adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m. The next RAB meeting will be held on August 1 st , 2017.