



**Vieques Environmental Restoration Program  
Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Atlantic**

**RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD (RAB)**

**Meeting Number 56**

**6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. & 7:45-8:45 p.m. | August 8, 2018 | Jorge’s Ice House Activities Center, Vieques, PR**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Attendees:**

Dan Waddill – Ex-Officio RAB Member, NAVFAC Atlantic	Daniel Vargas – USA Environmental
Daniel Hood – Ex-Officio RAB Member, NAVFAC Atlantic	Myrna Pagán – Community RAB Member
Kevin Cloe – Ex-Officio RAB Member, NAVFAC Atlantic	Stacie Notine – Community RAB Member
Madeline Rivera – NAVFAC Atlantic	Genoveva Rodríguez Páez – Community RAB member
Doug Pocze – Ex-Officio RAB Member, USEPA Region 2	Edna Rodriguez – Community member
Mike Barandiarán – Ex-Officio RAB Member, USFWS	Ardelle Ferrer – Vidas Viequenses Valen
Brett Doerr – CH2M	Anaelisa Pérez -- Vidas Viequenses Valen
Madeline Almodovar – CH2M	Erica Borlogn – Vidas Viequenses Valen
Daniel G. Concepción – CH2M	Luke Weinstein – Community member
Maria Danois – CH2M	Douglas McHoul – Community member
Don Shaw – USA Environmental	

*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:**

<b>Opening</b>	
<b>Madeline Almodovar</b> (CH2M/Facilitator)	The meeting began at 6:00 p.m. Participants were welcomed to the 56 <sup>th</sup> Vieques RAB meeting and were guided through a series of posters highlighting different aspects of the Vieques Environmental Restoration Program. Representatives from the Navy, USEPA, and the USFWS were available to answer questions.
<b>Dan Waddill</b> (Navy Program Manager) <b>Kevin Cloe</b> (Navy Project Manager) <b>Daniel Hood</b> (Navy Project Manager) <b>Madeline Rivera</b> (Navy Site Manager) <b>Mike Barandiarán</b> (USFWS Vieques Wildlife Refuge Manager) <b>Douglas Pocze</b> (USEPA Region 2) – Federal Facilities Section	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.

<b>Underwater and Beach Investigations Status Update</b>	
Kevin Cloe (Navy) Daniel Hood (Navy)	<p>Kevin Cloe (Navy) provided a status update of the underwater and beach investigations, which included the Beach Dynamics Study, UXO 16 Wide Area Assessment and Remedial Investigation (RI) offshore of SWMU 4.</p> <p>Various photographs and a map of Vieques showed the locations and timeline related to the underwater investigations.</p>
<b>Community Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stacie Notine (RAB community member) asked how the Hurricanes Irma and Maria impacted beaches and trails, especially with regards to erosion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Daniel Hood (Navy) indicated that the impacts resulted in erosion effects around some of the roads, beaches, and project sites. The Navy and local contractors promptly addressed the erosion issues in order to return to work on the cleanup as quickly as possible. Additionally, all beaches were inspected to determine if any munitions turned up on beaches following the hurricanes. Munitions were found only on a beach in the far end of the LIA.</li> <li>○ Mike Barandiarán (USFWS) added that USFWS continues with their plan to restore the public beaches and associated trails to pre-hurricane conditions, but that it will be a long-term effort.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) Process</b>	
Madeline Rivera (Navy)	<p>The CERCLA process poster included a flowchart and described each type of documentation generated for review by the regulatory agencies and the public. Madeline highlighted the steps in which the public can provide direct input into the decision-making process, like submitting comments on Proposed Remedial Action Plans (PRAPs).</p>
<b>Community Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stacie Notine (RAB community member) asked about the approximate number of Viequenses working in the cleanup in Vieques. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Madeline Rivera (Navy) indicated that they have about 60 workers involved in the Vieques Environmental Restoration Program and about two thirds (2/3) are Viequenses.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Status of Vieques Munitions Response Sites</b>	
Daniel Hood (Navy)	<p>Daniel Hood (Navy) presented a summary of the Munitions Response Program investigations including the planned and upcoming work. He explained the status of munitions response field activities at the East Maneuver Area, Live Impact Area, Surface Impact Area, and the Eastern Conservation Area.</p> <p>The corresponding poster showed sampling and restoration activities and timeline. A Vieques map showed the site locations.</p>
<b>Community Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stacie Notine (RAB community member) asked about additional detail regarding the Navy's current field work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Daniel Hood (Navy) indicated that they are continuing their work cutting and clearing vegetation using remote equipment in the 75-acre Submunitions Area, as</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	well as performing munitions clearance in the Surface Impact Area (SIA) near Puerto Diablo and near Punta Carenero.
<b>Key Areas Where Accelerated Cleanup is Taking Place to Foster Public Access</b>	
<b>Madeline Rivera (Navy)</b>	A poster presenting accelerated cleanup activities included a flowchart of the CERCLA process and described each type of documentation generated by the Navy for review by the regulatory agencies and the public. The poster included detailed timelines for SWMU 4, Punta Carenero, and UXO 18 Cayo La Chiva. Madeline explained how the Vieques Restoration Program is making significant progress in focused restoration efforts at areas where accelerated public use has been requested.
<b>Community Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A community member asked how a visitor would be able to distinguish between public areas and restricted areas. He also asked if the probability of finding munitions debris would increase in public areas within the Wildlife Refuge after the hurricanes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dan Waddill (Navy) stated that the Navy and its contractors and USFWS continually provide munition safety messages and educational materials to the public and have posted educational kiosks and safety signs along accessible areas within the refuge. This information includes the three (3) Rs of munitions safety: Recognize, Retreat, and Report, which will help visitors know what to do if they see anything that could be a munition. The Navy has installed consistent warning signage on all public areas and they inventoried their condition after the hurricanes, and restored/replaced them as necessary.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Status of Vieques Installation Restoration Sites</b>	
<b>Kevin Cloe (Navy) Dan Waddill (Navy)</b>	Kevin Cloe (Navy) described the work that is being performed on the environmental sites located on west and east Vieques. These sites comprise AOC E, SWMU 6, SWMU 1 and SWMU 20. The poster showed the projected timelines for the completion of each CERCLA step for each site. A map with an aerial image of Vieques showed the site locations and photographs showed the work performed on each site.
<b>Public Use Areas and Offshore Safety Zones</b>	
<b>Dan Waddill (Navy) Brett Doerr (CH2M)</b>	This public use areas and proposed offshore safety zones poster included a map of Vieques with the different types of proposed safety zones around the coastlines. The legend described the areas where mariners are prohibited from entering the area due to the known presence of underwater munitions, and also described the areas where anchoring, dredging, or trawling are prohibited due to the potential presence of underwater munitions.
<b>Community Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A community member asked about how to obtain details of the progress and advisories concerning the priority areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dan Waddill (Navy) welcomed the participation of the community member and stated that the RAB meetings provide opportunities for in-depth discussion regarding the different projects the Navy is undertaking as part of the Environmental Restoration Program. Dan also prompted the community member to sign-in and be added to the Vieques RAB mailing list so that he could receive the flyers and communications via email. In addition, the Navy posts the information on Facebook, public website, and via megaphone through town on the day prior and the day of the meeting.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Introductions (second part of the RAB Meeting after the SWMU 4 PRAP Public Meeting)**

**Madeline Almodovar (CH2M)** – Madeline introduced Mrs. Genoveva Rodriguez Páez as a new RAB community member.

<b>Community Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs. Rodriguez (RAB community member) introduced herself and stated that she was excited to be a representative of the community, and eager to learn about the Vieques Environmental Program to be able to provide an objective feedback from the community's point of view. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Kevin Cloe (Navy) thanked Mrs. Rodriguez for her commitment and welcomed her to the RAB. Kevin also mentioned that there will be an official welcome in follow up correspondence from the Navy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
---------------------------	---

**May 2018 Non-Time Critical Removal Action of Encrusted Munitions Offshore of UXO 15 PI-9 East**

<b>Daniel Hood (Navy)</b>	<p>Daniel provided an overview of the site and the activities completed in coordination with the regulatory agencies. PI-9 East was a location where Navy munitions debris was dumped in the shallow coastal waters. This area presented challenges to munitions removal from the water without damaging the surrounding coastline environment and the habitat. Careful planning culminated in a positive outcome as the field work was carried out in May 2018 using techniques concurred upon by the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service to protect threatened and endangered species. A biologist was present on-site to ensure that the removal action did not damage threatened or endangered species. A seawater-filled coffer dam was used to temporarily drain the work area to be able to remove the munitions debris in a safe manner. A series of photographs showcased the progression of the munitions debris removal work and coffer dam removal. During this activity no Munitions and Explosives of Concern (MEC) were identified; the workers removed over 2,500 pounds of debris including more than 3,000 munitions debris items and trash. The next step for the area is to install erosion control along the coast.</p>
---------------------------	---

<b>Community Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stacie Notine (RAB community member) – asked about the timeline related to the work completed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Daniel Hood (Navy) stated that working within the water shoreline added complexity. It took almost four (4) years of planning and getting approvals from the Regulatory Agencies to conduct the work, but completing the activity took only a few days.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
---------------------------	---

**Vieques Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Fair**

<b>Madeline Rivera (Navy)</b>	<p>Madeline Rivera (Navy) – shared her contact information with the RAB members, and explained her role as the Navy Site Manager. Madeline's presentation highlighted the upcoming community involvement activity scheduled to take place in late August 2018. The activity is a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fair to provide Vieques high school students with an overview of the technical professions and the technical professionals involved in the Vieques Restoration Program and to encourage the students to consider degrees in STEM fields. The event was originally planned for 2017, but it was postponed due to the emergencies caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria.</p>
-------------------------------	---

<b>Community Feedback</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genoveva Rodriguez (community RAB member) asked if the Navy had informed the Vieques community about this activity. She also asked about who sponsors the event and the professions that would be highlighted.</li> </ul>
---------------------------	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Madeline Rivera (Navy) stated that the event is being coordinated through the Puerto Rico Department of Education, and the school director. The activity will take place in the area in front of Camp Garcia by the USFWS informational kiosk. Madeline stated that the Navy and its contractors CH2M and USA Environmental are sponsoring the fair. The professions that will be highlighted include Health and Safety Manager, Engineering, Geology, Biology, Chemistry, Unexploded Ordnance Technician and Geographical Informational Systems; local employees will be active participants in the fair.</li> </ul>
<b>Regulatory Agency Update</b>	
<b>Douglas Pocze (USEPA)</b>	<p>Mr. Pocze thanked the participants for contributing to the RAB meeting, he excused Daniel Rodriguez from attending the meeting due to a conflict in his schedule. Douglas described the recent EPA Region 2 organizational changes, and staff transition from Julio Vázquez to Jessica Mollin as RPM for the terrestrial munitions sites.</p> <p>Douglas added that USEPA has reviewed and provided comments on the Site Management Plan for fiscal year 2019; and in consultation with the state regulatory partners and the Navy, the SWMU 6 Record of Decision was approved in July 2018. This document will be posted to the Vieques Administrative Record.</p>
<b>Mike Barandiarán (USFWS)</b>	<p>Mike Barandiarán (USFWS) -- stated that he is glad that the public participated in the RAB meeting. He added that USFWS is continuing work to re-open public beaches and other public areas that suffered damage from the Hurricanes Irma and Maria. He mentioned their current focus is Playa Escondida, La Plata, and La Platita; afterward they expect to work in Playa Grande, Punta Arenas over at the west, which will probably take considerable effort and time.</p>
<b>Adjournment</b>	
<b>Madeline Almodovar (CH2M)</b>	<p>Madeline (CH2M) thanked all the participants and presenters for attending and contributing to the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m. The next RAB meeting is scheduled for November 7, 2018.</p>