

Site Specific Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

February 18, 1999

The February 18, 1999, Site Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) meeting took place at the Information Age Park Resource Center in Paducah at 5:30 p.m.

The following board members were present: Nola Courtney, Mark Donham, Edward Duff, Angela Farmer, Vicki Jones, Linda Long, Ray McLennan, Jim Smart, and Gregory Waldrop. The facilitator present was Steve Kay. The United States Department of Energy (DOE) federal coordinator present was John Sheppard. Also present were the following members of the public and employees, contractors, and subcontractors of the DOE: Judith Bradbury, Kristi Branch, Jeannie Brandstetter, Bryan Clayton, Keith Feather, Shelley Hawkins, Dennis Hill, Pat Hopper, Norm Jetta, Jimmy Massey, and Janice Tucker.

Agenda

Steve Kay called the meeting to order and asked if there were any modifications to the agenda. Ray McLennan proposed adding a discussion of the Paducah-Area Community Reuse Organization (PACRO) meeting. Dennis Hill said Shelley Hawkins had added a folder containing information on PACRO activities to the SSAB library in the office. Mark Donham proposed adding a discussion on the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the shipment of Fernald uranium. Both items were added after the cumulative effects discussion. The amended agenda was approved.

Minutes

The January 21, 1999, meeting minutes were approved by consensus.

Information Handouts

John Sheppard said he attended the national SSAB chairs' meeting this week at the Savannah River Site. He said Fernald is hosting a waste transportation conference May 20 through 23, 1999, in Cincinnati. Sheppard said he anticipated the board might like to have representation at this conference. The national chairs' conference is scheduled for September 1999, possibly at Hanford. Sheppard said the Oak Ridge SSAB is hoping to sponsor a stewardship workshop in October or November 1999. This workshop would focus on the process for ensuring sites are safe decades from now.

Environmental Management and Enrichment Facilities Project Updates

Members received a handout on the Environmental Management and Enrichment Facilities (EM&EF) updates. Jeannie Brandstetter referred to the Surface Water Operable Unit (SWOU) as a new item on the update. She said there is a SWOU scoping document that will be issued at the end of March. Brandstetter said some information on the SWOU could be brought to the March meeting for the SSAB members. Donham asked if the SWOU is included in the Site Management Plan (SMP). Sheppard said the SWOU is one of the four key operable units. Donham asked if it includes areas where there could be runoff, and Sheppard said yes.

Vortec Update

Hill referred to a fact sheet given to the members at the meeting on the Fluor Daniel Fernald Proof-of-Principle Program report. Hill said this report that Donham had requested has not been published yet; however, the board would receive a copy when it is published. He said the Vortec Corporation prepared the fact sheet and it contains general information on the test performed at Fernald.

Depleted Uranium Hexafluoride Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement Update

Hill said there is nothing new to report except there have been some personnel changes in Washington with the program. Donham asked about the implementation of the bill passed by Senator McConnell. Hill said the money has not been appropriated at this point. Sheppard said the DOE is still working on its conversion plan report to Congress and suggested the SSAB keep the update on its agenda because the DOE is moving toward budget deadlines. Donham asked about the timeline on implementation. Sheppard said it would probably be no later than April 1999. Donham asked if the SSAB would receive a copy of the report when it is released and Sheppard said yes. Donham said the bill requires that the conversion plan comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and asked if the DOE intends to use the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that is being written now to comply with the bill. Jimmy Massey said he recalled the bill to state that the proper NEPA process would be executed in the period of time before the conversion facility is built. Janice Tucker said the appropriations subcommittee said that the DOE had requested money for Fiscal Year 2000 for the implementation of the NEPA process for the conversion facility.

Site Specific Advisory Board Evaluation

Judith Bradbury and Kristi Branch of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) discussed the final evaluation of the SSABs that they had recently completed. Bradbury said the final report includes an overview report and an individual report that includes all the sites. She encouraged the members to read the overview report first and then the individual report. Bradbury said the evaluation is required by Congress and committees were set up by the DOE to include the PNNL authors and a representative from each of the boards. She said during this time, the Paducah SSAB had not yet been established. Bradbury said the DOE's basic purpose for the establishment of the SSABs is to receive input from a diversity of viewpoints and demographics in the community.

Bradbury identified the following factors listed in the report that contribute to effective boards: community context; board composition; purpose, goals, and commitment to consensus; internal processes and functions, public engagement, and DOE and regulator engagement. Bradbury said the Paducah board does a great job in having diversity of members. She said Paducah, however, does not have the time for social interaction that other boards have. She said this interaction can help build closer relationships between members. Bradbury said it is very important to take time and consider how the board is doing. She suggested self evaluations at retreats or after each meeting. Bradbury also stressed the importance of having technical support. She said the extent to which the DOE participates and values the board's input also is important. Bradbury said the evaluation was done solely to help the SSABs and provide feedback, not to be a scoreboard.

Linda Long asked when Bradbury was in Paducah to collect data for the report. Bradbury said during the July 1998 meeting. Long asked how many people Bradbury interviewed and Bradbury said she would have to check her record and get back with Long, but said she was here for an entire week. Long said she felt the Paducah SSAB was unfairly criticized. She said the Paducah SSAB deals with a public that is not interested, news media that prefer to keep people in the dark, and an environment that has been so badly damaged that it cannot really be restored. Long said a lot of people on the SSAB have not even been on DOE property. Bradbury suggested the board take a tour of the site. Donham said when the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability (ANA) came to Paducah, its tour of the plant was more extensive than the one for the SSAB. Brandstetter said this might have been due to time, since the ANA was here for an entire day.

Jim Smart said the evaluation had a lot of good suggestions; however, he would like to have seen some specific recommendations for Paducah on the final report. Bradbury said she thought it was important for the evaluation not to provide recommendations so the board could work together to create solutions. Bradbury offered to help with this if requested. Gregory Waldrop said the three main issues in which the Paducah SSAB needs work include public engagement, technical support, and team-building and leadership. Angela Farmer said it would be beneficial for the SSAB to have a brainstorming session. She said the SSAB may have the technical support it needs with its own members.

McLennan asked Bradbury what her observations were on the co-chairs. Bradbury said co-chairs often have been a problem because they are most likely chosen because of their differing

viewpoints. Co-chairs can be helpful, however, because it keeps one person's view from dominating the board. She said the co-chairs are sometimes needed when the board is first starting, but if the co-chairs disagree too often, it can prevent team-building. Bradbury said Pantex is the only other board with co-chairs. She said it is important for the board to consider whether having co-chairs furthers the purpose of the board.

Donham said he was not very happy with the draft evaluation because it labeled him as a critic of the DOE and he felt the evaluation was unfair and unprofessional. Bradbury said the evaluation was not intended to criticize. She said drafts were sent out in order to receive comments back from the members. She said in the final report, PNNL took into account Donham's comments, stating that people who were critical were needed on the board. Branch said they took a careful look at the issue of labeling people and it carried consequences that had not been considered before, so the issue was rectified in the final report. Donham said he thought the recommendations made by the SSAB were not given enough credit in the report. He said the Paducah SSAB is spending a small fraction of its budget compared to what the other SSABs are spending. He said there were a lot of good things that have come out of the SSAB that had not been reported in the evaluation. Branch said with the scope of the evaluation, they wanted to focus more on the internal processes of the board because this proved more feasible within the timeframe of the report. Bradbury said some of the accomplishments were listed at the end of the report. She said there have been a lot of positive changes with the Paducah SSAB since their visit last year.

Some of the members agreed that a tour of the plant would be helpful. Sheppard said as key proposals come up, there may be events to see at the plant that would benefit the board. Nola Courtney and Sheppard agreed to work on selecting a time for a tour of the plant for the board. Smart suggested the establishment of a committee to make recommendations from the evaluation to the board. Vicki Jones, Waldrop, and Smart agreed to serve on the committee and meet before the March meeting to review the evaluation and present suggestions.

Northeast and Northwest Plumes Pump and Treat Facilities

Bill Tanner was not able to attend the meeting. Hawkins said she had been in contact with Tanner and that they are working on sending out letters to qualified parties requesting technical support for the board.

Groundwater Operable Unit

Bryan Clayton, Bechtel Jacobs Company LLC task leader, gave fact sheets to the board that detailed the progress of the Groundwater Operable Unit (GWOU). Clayton said the GWOU combines Waste Area Groups (WAGs) 6, 27, and 28 into one operable unit. He said the D1 Treatability Study reports on chemical oxidation and surfactant flushing of WAG 6 soils were submitted to the regulators February 15, 1999. The generalized chemical oxidation results included that bench-scale testing conducted on the Regional Gravel Aquifer soils using Hydrogen Peroxide. It was determined that using Hydrogen Peroxide was more effective than using Potassium Permanganate. Farmer asked what molar concentrations were used for the testing.

Clayton said he did not know because the test was done by PNNL, but he could get that information for Farmer. Clayton said the generalized findings were that the recycling of surfactants may increase the cost of implementation of *in situ* flushing.

Clayton said a Feasibility Study (FS) Workplan on the GWOU was issued to the regulators in early February 1999. He said an Information Brief on the GWOU has been completed for vendors that may have remedial technologies. This provides some basic information on the site. Clayton said the final project consists of identifying the Innovative Treatment Remediation Demonstration (ITRD). He said the ITRD is a group of individuals that are remediation specialists, and the organization is sponsored by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the DOE. The intent of the ITRD is to assist in the FS for the GWOU and evaluate remedial alternatives and potential actions.

Cumulative Effects on the Site

Donham said a good place to start with this issue would be on the draft EA for Fernald. He read the portion on cumulative impacts from the draft. McLennan said he would like for the Accelerating Cleanup Plan to have property restoration as the future use scenario. He said if the goal is to make the property unusable, this changes all the current cleanup goals. Massey said the future use scenario for plant is continued industrial use, ensuring a safe environment for the workers onsite. Sheppard said the plan includes a recreational use scenario for outside the fence. Farmer said she is concerned with the water coming out of the plant and considers this a larger impact.

Waldrop said the GWOU is one response to the notion of a more comprehensive look at cumulative impacts. Donham said a sitewide EIS on the SMP should be done and it should include plans for cylinders and cleanup. Donham recommended that the new members receive a copy of the Federal Facilities Agreement (FFA) and the SMP because these documents are the major regulatory drivers for the site. Donham said cleanup standards have not even been set yet. Waldrop asked if it would require an EIS to get alternatives for the cleanup of the site. Donham said the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) analysis is supposed to look at alternatives. He said the NEPA analysis is supposed to be incorporated into CERCLA to save paperwork.

Sheppard said there was an error in the Fernald EA in that transportation issues were not included and he said an addendum has been issued and will be provided to the members. Sheppard said the comment period also has been extended until March 4, 1999.

Waldrop said there seemed to be some resistance to a sitewide EIS and Jones said it may be because of the high cost of an EIS. Massey said a comprehensive record of decision (ROD) considers cumulative effects at the site; however, issues are addressed individually. Courtney asked at what point will a final sitewide ROD be issued. Massey said around 2010 or 2012. Donham said this would be procedurally incorrect because it would come after decisions are made on the operable units. Sheppard said there is give and take on what is the best alternative because technology is changing so rapidly. Donham said that as long as parts of the plan are analyzed

individually, findings of no significant impacts (FONSI) will probably be issued. Donham said FONSI and categorical exclusions for individual projects within large sites are referred to as segmenting in the absence of a sitewide EIS or comprehensive study of cumulative effects.

Donham said the public has leverage in certain cases because the DOE is bound to respond to public comments. Donham said environmental reports from the plant, however, are not subject to public scrutiny. Donham said most of the major sites have done their own sitewide EIS and he said the NEPA regulations specifically provide for this. Massey said it might be interesting to see how many other sites have their own sitewide EISs and if they were useful. Donham said maybe the board members could be provided with copies of these EISs. Jones suggested contacting other SSABs to see their opinions on the EISs. Hawkins said she would contact the document centers of other sites to see if the EISs were available. Sheppard said the SSAB might want to place an agenda item on the monthly conference call for SSAB members concerning questions about EISs done at other sites.

Waldrop asked if it would be helpful to hire an environmental firm to conduct an intensive, projected evaluation short of a comprehensive EIS for the site. He said the SSAB could then provide the DOE with actual issues that may be at stake and would give the SSAB a concentrated look at a sitewide EIS for Paducah. Farmer said she is concerned about involving so much paperwork. The members agreed that obtaining EISs from other sites would be a good initial step in this issue and that the consideration of hiring someone to conduct a study should be delayed until the board has had time to review the other EISs. This issue was placed on the agenda for March.

Draft Environmental Assessment for Fernald

Donham said Fernald has a regulatory document such as an FFA under Superfund with legally binding timelines. Donham said it seems absurd for the EPA to fine the DOE. He said in order to avoid fines, the DOE must move the uranium at Fernald. Donham asked if this was an adequate justification of doing something that might cost more later. He said moving the uranium does not provide any permanent or long-term relief. McLennan said he feels strongly about not moving the uranium. Massey said there is a trend to consolidate materials from defense programs. This would reduce costs to the DOE by having materials in one location.

Farmer asked what the long-term plan was for the uranium. Massey said if the uranium comes to Paducah or Portsmouth, a uranium storage/conversion program would be in place. Sheppard said the Fernald plan includes off-site disposition of the uranium and a significant portion of the low-level waste would stay onsite at Fernald. Donham said that Paducah is still in the process of building new cylinder yards so cylinders can be placed on concrete pads, and asked if there was a place for the new cylinders. Massey said the DOE would have to build facilities if the uranium came to Paducah. Sheppard said the material being considered for transportation is not uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) in general — it is an array of uranium materials including ingot and other things. He said each site includes different options for the same array of materials.

McLennan asked how far Fernald was from Portsmouth. Sheppard said about 120 miles. Waldrop asked about the timeline on moving the uranium and Sheppard said September 1999. Jones gave SSAB members a copy of her comments on the Fernald EA. Farmer said Paducah has a lot of contaminated materials also and it does not seem fair that Paducah should receive someone else's contamination. Sheppard said Paducah has ongoing plans for off-site disposition of its waste. He said the uranium material from Fernald is considered a resource to the government that requires special management and is not considered a waste. Donham said he would like to propose that the Fernald uranium not be sent to Paducah. Smart asked if the uranium could be an economic asset to the area or if it could be beneficial if properly managed. Waldrop said Paducah is a long shot for receiving the Atomic Vapor Laser Isotope Separation technology and that the plant is going to need a viable economic connection. Farmer asked that if the uranium is an economic benefit, why is Fernald wanting to get rid of it. Massey said Fernald is a cleanup site only, and the DOE is trying to meet the FFA requirements and consolidate waste.

Waldrop said the seismic possibilities at Paducah should be a concern. Sheppard said he is concerned about combining the UF₆ conversion facility and the Fernald material because it is so different. Sheppard asked Massey if the PACRO has said anything about receiving the material as an attractive idea to the area. Massey said the issue was not on the PACRO agenda for its meeting this week. Donham asked if consolidating the material here was not a major consideration since the majority of the material is not UF₆. Sheppard said the conversion plant is a congressional directive, completed independently of the Fernald material. Smart said with the chemical plants in Calvert City, this area has a lot of toxins already. He said since all of this will not go away, we need to learn how to manage the materials properly. Courtney said it does not seem like there is that much economic potential in receiving the uranium. She said she prefers for the uranium to not come to Paducah, but she also did not think that the SSAB should specify where it should go. McLennan said the uranium should be moved to the closest site because this would put less communities in between at risk.

Donham said one alternative is for Fernald to amend its FFA. Jones said if the DOE had more time under the regulations, the DOE could look at commercial facilities for disposal of the uranium. The proposal made by the SSAB was to accept Jones' comments on the Fernald EA. In addition, the SSAB recommended that the appropriate regulatory documents at Fernald be amended to allow the Fernald site to retain the uranium, pending the development of a long-term strategy for disposal of the material. Also, the SSAB proposed the comment that if the uranium is moved temporarily, it should be moved to the nearest feasible site to reduce the environmental impact of transportation to surrounding communities. The comments were approved by the SSAB and will be sent to David Allen in Oak Ridge before the March 4, 1999, deadline.

Paducah-Area Community Reuse Organization

Massey said the PACRO received the results from the Lockwood Greene and ELR consultants on the report on the transition plan. He said the PACRO is asking for \$8 million to support its efforts for workforce transition in western Kentucky. Massey said the PACRO is looking at a broader economic development basis for the area and what needs to be done to offset the impact of layoffs.

DOE Response to SSAB Recommendations

Sheppard said there was nothing pending in this area.

Site Specific Advisory Board Workplan

The SSAB Workplan was updated. Sheppard said the DOE is waiting for state and EPA comments for WAGs 9 and 11. This item was added to the March agenda. Decontamination and decommissioning was moved to June 1999. State comments also are due for the WAG 6 Remedial Investigation and Waldrop proposed adding this to the March agenda. Courtney proposed adding WAG 22 to the agenda for DOE's response to regulator comments. Sheppard said there is a risk profile document for Paducah being developed by a DOE complex group that will be out for comment in March. He suggested adding this to the agenda. Donham suggested adding an update on the progress of the FFA to the agenda in March. He said it would be good to have a review on the status of deliverables and milestones.

Waldrop said transportation is an important issue that needs to be considered on the agenda at some point. Sheppard said the waste transportation workshop that will be hosted by Fernald is May 20 through 23, 1999, and said members need to look at what transportation issues are at Paducah so they can make a contribution to the workshop. Waldrop said the chairs' conference is a good place to tackle issues that are common across the sites. Sheppard suggested the members consider who they want to represent the SSAB at the waste transportation conference in Cincinnati. Sheppard said the following four questions were presented at the chairs conference for input from different sites on waste issues.

1. What are the key transportation issues, challenges, and decisions at your site?
2. What are the key transportation areas you would like to learn at this workshop?
3. Where can stakeholders be most helpful in the transportation issue resolution process?
4. What results from the workshop would you like to see?

Financial Update

The SSAB received a financial report containing the budgets and amounts spent from Jacobs Engineering and Roberts and Kay, Inc. Hill said the hours and dollars had been broken down in this spreadsheet for Jacobs Engineering and the latest invoice from Roberts and Kay had been included. Hill said he would be glad to discuss the report with anyone after they had time to review the report.

Site Specific Advisory Board Web Page

Hill said all of the files for the web page have been transferred to the DOE Oak Ridge office. Some of the graphics in the web page will need to be resent. Hill said the web page should be on the Internet soon and Hawkins would inform the members of the address.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Site Specific Advisory Board Membership

The board members reviewed five applications for membership. The SSAB elected the following five applicants to be accepted for membership: Randy (Kit) Atkinson, Merryman Kemp, Douglas Raper, Rosa Scott, and Pat Stephenson.

The next meeting will be held March 18, 1999, at the Information Age Park Resource Center at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was adjourned.

Tentative agenda for the March 18, 1999, meeting:

- Facilitator's Orientation on Procedures to New Members
- Public Comments from Guests
- Minutes
- Information (Handouts)
- EM&EF Project Updates
- Vortec Update
- Depleted UF₆ Programmatic EIS Update
- Transportation of Wastes/Hazardous Materials
- WAG 6 — Gregory Waldrop
- WAG 22, SWMUs 2 and 3 — Nola Courtney
- WAGs 9 and 11
- FFA Review — John Morgan
- Recommendations from SSAB Evaluation Subcommittee — Jim Smart
- Northeast and Northwest Plume Pump and Treat Facilities — Bill Tanner
- Cumulative Effects on the Site
- Comments on Risk Profile Document
- DOE Response to SSAB Recommendations — Jimmie Hodges
- Administrative Issues for the Board
 - Review of the SSAB Draft Workplan
 - Financial Update
 - Web Page Update

Action Items

- Nola Courtney and John Sheppard to determine a timeframe for a tour of the plant for the SSAB members.
- Jim Smart, Vicki Jones, and Gregory Waldrop to meet before the March meeting to review the SSAB Evaluation and make recommendations to present at the March meeting.
- Bryan Clayton to provide Angela Farmer with information on molar concentrations used for the Potassium Permanganate testing at PNNL for the WAG 6 Treatability Study. **(Complete)**
- Shelley Hawkins to provide new board members with a copy of the FFA and the SMP. **(Complete)**
- Shelley Hawkins to provide Jim Smart with the Internet address for the FFA. **(Complete)**
- Dennis Hill to provide SSAB with a copy of the addendum for the Fernald EA. **(Complete)**
- Dennis Hill and Shelley Hawkins to contact other sites and obtain copies of sitewide EISs for the office along with information such as cost and effectiveness for SSAB members. **(Complete)**
- John Sheppard to place a discussion of the effectiveness sitewide EISs on the agenda for the national chairs meeting.
- Dennis Hill to provide new SSAB members with a copy of DOE's NEPA regulations. **(Complete)**