

Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant Site Specific Advisory Board Informal Meeting Minutes

October 15, 1998

The October 15, 1998, 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: Vicki Jones, Ronald Lamb, Linda Long, Ray McLennan, Craig Rhodes, and Gregory Waldrop. The facilitator present was Steve Kay. The ex officio member present was John Volpe. 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: Jeannie Brandstetter, Bryan Clayton, Dave Dollins, Shelley Hawkins, Dennis Hill, Jimmy Massey, John Morgan, and Myrna Redfield.

Agenda

Steve Kay called the meeting to order and asked if there were any modifications to the agenda. Vicki Jones proposed adding a discussion about the facilitator contract under administrative issues. Dennis Hill proposed adding a discussion about a web page for the SSAB under administrative issues.

Minutes

The minutes from the September 17, 1998, meeting could not be approved since a quorum was not present.

Information (Handouts)

John Sheppard referred to the letter from Jimmie Hodges to the SSAB on the Information Management System Policy. He said it was a statement for SSAB review that the Oak Ridge Environmental Management Program has identified in response to ISO 14,000. Sheppard said the SSAB also should have received an information package on pending and mixed low-level waste.

Environmental Management and Enrichment Facilities Project Updates

Members received a handout on the Environmental Management and Enrichment Facilities (EM&EF) updates. There were no comments on the updates.

Vortec Update

Craig Rhodes asked how the ratio was determined in the flux proposed for use in Vortec. He said he was concerned this material might devitrify. Myrna Redfield said the best way to determine this would be for David Tidwell to respond to Rhodes and said this could be taken as an action item. Sheppard said the Vortec Environmental Assessment is being revised to incorporate comments and the new draft has gone to Oak Ridge and Headquarters for review.

Depleted Uranium Hexafluoride Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

Hill said an information packet and a flowchart of the life-cycle closure tasks were available. He said Jeannie Brandstetter brought this packet back from the October 8, 1998, meeting in Lexington. He said the DOE still is developing a plan to request money for the conversion of the depleted uranium hexafluoride (UF₆).

Federal Facility Agreement Strategies and Accelerating Cleanup Plan

John Morgan explained the information packet he gave the SSAB. Morgan said the strategy has received comments from the SSAB. He said the DOE has initiated the Management and Integration Contract and the strategy is being revised accordingly. An independent peer review also has been done on the strategy. The new strategy should show how all these factors have been incorporated. Morgan said the current strategy focuses on a solid waste management unit (SWMU)-by-SWMU approach and that this strategy was revised to reflect a sitewide remedial approach. He said separate waste area groups (WAGs) have now been combined into what is called the Groundwater Operable Unit (GOU). There were benefits from the budgeting perspective to group these projects. Morgan said a lot of money was going into excessive paperwork under the current strategy; however, the new strategy should help eliminate this as a more aggressive baseline for remediation has been considered. The total cleanup of the site cannot be done until decontamination and decommissioning is taken into account and the new strategy reflects this. He said the new strategy accelerates cleanup by approximately four years and the record of decision (ROD) for groundwater by five years. Morgan said the sitewide remedial objectives considered in the new strategy are to protect off-site groundwater users, recreational users and ecosystems, and industrial workers. Key baseline assumptions for the new strategy include the regional containment of dense nonaqueous phase liquid (DNAPL) sources contributing to off-site groundwater contamination and DNAPL source reduction at the C-400 area to reduce DNAPL mass. Morgan said the revision to the Site Management Plan (SMP) is due in November and the Federal Facilities Agreement currently is being revised to include new Fiscal Year (FY) 1999 milestones.

Ray McLennan asked if prioritization would be affected by the new strategy. Redfield said starting in FY 2000, the projects in Paducah will be changing and the GOU will be seen in place of several WAGs. McLennan asked when the strategy would be out for comment. Morgan said the SMP should be available for public comment November 15. Ronald Lamb said he was concerned about lumping projects together because one project may take more money than the others and there is a possibility the other projects would be left out. Jimmy Massey said the DOE has an FY baseline plan. Massey said he monitors the progress of projects every month. Bechtel Jacobs Company LLC and the DOE have people assigned to each project to make sure the project gets completed. He said this system maintains control in making sure project's commitments are met. Sheppard said the baseline is the best estimate currently; however, new technologies may be presented along the way and adjustments will need to be made to the baseline accordingly. McLennan asked if the end-use definition had been changed. Morgan said it had not changed from industrial/recreational. Lamb said the end-use definition is why sitewide evaluation needs to be considered.

Kay asked if there was a point when the board would be able to look at its workplan and make changes to reflect the new strategy. Hill said this would be something to think about as the new strategy began

to take place and the changes would be reflected in project updates to the board.

Waste Area Group 6 Remedial Investigation

Gregory Waldrop said the Remedial Investigation (RI) for WAG 6 is in the middle of its comment period. Bryan Clayton said the comment period ends December 16. He said a D2 document will be issued back to the state for review and hopefully for approval. Clayton said all of the documentation for the WAG 6 RI Report then becomes part of the GOU. Waldrop reminded the board that this is the site underneath an operating building that is a major source of contamination at the site. Clayton said ongoing treatability studies are being conducted. He said oxidation is a strategy being considered. The RI Report for WAG 6 was put back on the agenda for November.

Northeast and Northwest Plumes Pump and Treat Facilities

This discussion was postponed until November so Bill Tanner could present his information to the board.

Training Options for the SSAB

This discussion also was postponed since a quorum was not present for voting.

DOE Response to SSAB Recommendations

Sheppard referred to the letter written by the DOE in response to SSAB Recommendation 98-3 regarding the WAG 22, SWMUs 7 and 30 Feasibility Study (FS). The SSAB was given a chance to look over the letter, fact sheet, and the “Scrap Metal Relative to WAGs 22, 24, and 3” map.

Waldrop asked if SWMUs 7 and 30 contained some of the burial grounds that have radiological waste. Dave Dollins said some of the grounds are radioactive. He said the alternatives were tailored toward dealing with surface soil and various wastes. Waldrop asked if, in terms of assumptions, SWMUs 7 and 30 would not be considered to have enough radioactive waste for excavation. Dollins said that was correct. He said the regulators’ greatest concern was the type of waste and that the DOE has an inventory of the types of waste kept on this site. Waldrop asked if the DOE was confident in the inventory of waste at this point. Dollins said he had confidence in the inventory. He said the sampling that is occurring now is mirroring or confirming the inventory. He said the DOE is doing the best it can with what it has to make characterization. Clayton said this area is the most sampled area on the Paducah site. John Volpe asked if the sampling was filtered as he suggested. Dollins said, yes. Volpe said if it was considered for exposure, the DOE may not wish to filter; however, if it was considered for contaminant transport, the DOE may wish to filter the sampling. Massey said data quality objectives must be considered. Volpe said there were some elevated levels based on initial samples, up in the thousands of picoCuries per liter, and he said he would like to see proof that this was not normal.

Sheppard said a key follow-up to this evaluation would be a look at the burial grounds under the new strategy. Hill said additional sampling information that was requested as one of last month’s action items would be available in the D2 version of the SWMUs 7 and 30 FS. Lamb asked if Outfall 001 is considered Big Bayou Creek. Clayton said it is one of the outfalls that goes through the creek. Volpe

said evidence of elevated levels have not been seen at that outfall. Morgan said this was not one of the site's high outfall ditches. McLennan asked if the plant would have a fence and an end use of mixed industrial once remediation was complete. Morgan said, yes. McLennan asked if monitoring would be required at this point. Morgan said there would be long-term monitoring after remediation. Volpe said the free-release level should be the goal for end use and is something he has been pushing.

Waldrop asked if excavation might be a likely option considered later. Massey said in terms of alternatives, it is not known right now. He said excavation would be considered later if risk data were present. Dollins said the DOE is trying to maintain balance and evaluate priorities in remediation of the site. McLennan said he could not understand how nonhazardous waste received such a high ranking in priorities. Dollins said the ideal situation would be to have money for the excavation of everything. Sheppard said in the new strategy, the possibility of new information should not be ruled out and adjustments might be made along this line. Dollins said, after the ROD, it was determined that a lot of waste was in the water and that this was an instance where changes had to be made after decisions. Waldrop said the SSAB's concern has been the cumulative effect to the site. Massey said this concern has been heard and hopes the SSAB sees this in the new strategy.

Waldrop asked about funding for water treatment. Sheppard said the budget has been signed and the total amount is what the DOE had expected after budget cuts for FY 1999. Waldrop requested to see the budget for the last five years for Paducah. He said seeing a five-year trend, particularly concerning Paducah, would be helpful. Massey said there are times when Oak Ridge Operations projects do not have enough funding to meet regulatory commitments. Lamb asked if SSAB members were able to lobby for budget dollars. Sheppard said he would check into guidance on SSAB lobbying. He said there has been a prohibition of using travel money to go to Washington to lobby; however, a statement was made at the chair's conference in Denver, Colorado, concerning a change in this rule allowing lobbying, if there were a set conference to discuss issues.

Financial Update

Hill said the closeout cost spent by the SSAB in FY 1998 was \$46,770. He said the budget next year is approximately \$86,000. This does not include travel or facilitator costs, which come from separate accounts. He said the total budget for FY 1998 is approximately \$100,000.

SSAB Web Page

Hill said he asked Shelley Hawkins to establish a web page for the Paducah SSAB. Information on cost and design was provided to the board. Hill said total monthly costs for the web page and internet access would be about \$50 per month and initial set up costs for the web page would be about \$170. This estimate does not include Hawkins' time to update the page each month. Hill suggested linking the web page to other SSAB web pages and/or DOE Environmental Management sites. Sheppard asked if it is possible to link the SSAB web page with Paducah community web pages. Hill said it would be possible to link to Paducah Chamber of Commerce or other local web pages. Hill said if the board agrees to have the web page, it will be ready to go online as soon as it is approved.

SSAB Workplan

The SSAB Workplan was updated. Waldrop said that some sort of response on the Hanford shipment was needed under the topic of transportation. Waldrop asked Jones if she had heard anything about the Fish and Wildlife Survey and Jones said she had not yet received a reply. Waldrop said he wondered if the Fish and Wildlife people might provide the SSAB with an update. Massey said he knew that the Agreement in Principle (AIP) department of the state is doing some DOE-sponsored studies and Jones said she thought the Fish and Wildlife people were observing the results from these studies. Waldrop said it would be useful to know the ongoing natural resource studies and requested to see a list of the DOE-sponsored studies.

SSAB Membership

Waldrop gave a brief report he received from Nola Courtney on membership. He said eight inquiries had been received from the media advisory for membership and one membership form had been completed and returned. Waldrop suggested going to the city or county government to recruit underrepresented people. He said it was important for the SSAB to get on the radar screen in the community to allow people to get connected with what is happening at the plant.

Facilitator Contract

The contract for Steve Kay is up this December. The SSAB decided to postpone the decision for renewal of the contract until next month for a quorum to be present.

Waldrop asked if anyone on the SSAB was connected with the Paducah-Area Community Reuse Organization (PACRO). Sheppard said Jimmie Hodges was connected with the organization. Waldrop said it seems that the PACRO and the SSAB may have related goals and an update on PACRO progress might be helpful. Massey said the PACRO meets on a monthly basis and its executive committee meets October 21 at the Information Age Park Resource Center at 3:30 p.m. This meeting is open to the public and some of the SSAB members expressed an interest in attending. Waldrop said there should be some sort of connection between the PACRO and the SSAB. Massey said David Fuller is a member of the PACRO. Sheppard said it might be useful for the SSAB to consider what schedules are significant in remediation or end use and then determine if these schedules are related to what the PACRO considers significant. McLennan said it seems the media have concentrated only on worker retraining when referring to the PACRO.

The next meeting will be held November 19, 1998, at the Information Age Park Resource Center at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was adjourned.

Tentative agenda for the November 19, 1998, meeting:

- Public Comments from Guests
- Minutes
- Information (Handouts)
- EM&EF Project Updates
- Vortec Update
- Depleted UF6 PEIS Update
- Transportation of Wastes/Hazardous Materials

- PACRO æ how it relates to SSAB
- WAG 6 Remedial Investigation Report
- WAG 22, SWMU 2
- Northeast and Northwest Plumes Pump and Treat Facilities
- Training Options for SSAB
- DOE Response to SSAB Recommendations
- Administrative Plans for the Board
- Review of the SSAB Draft Workplan
- Financial Update
- Web Page
- SSAB Membership
- Facilitator Contract

Action Items

- David Tidwell contact Craig Rhodes to answer questions about the Vortec flux and how the research was conducted.
- Provide Gregory Waldrop with five-year budget trend for Paducah.
- Check SSAB guidance on rules or prohibitions to SSAB lobbying.
- Check on how much web page space the SSAB is allowed to have under the Apex plan. (complete — 50 megs)
- Provide SSAB with a list of DOE-sponsored natural resource studies being conducted by the AIP department of the state.