

Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant Site Specific Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

September 17, 1998

The September 17, 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: Nola Courtney, Mark Donham, Edward Duff, Vicki Jones, Ronald Lamb, Linda Long, Ray McLennan, Craig Rhodes, Bill Tanner, and Gregory Waldrop. The facilitator present was Steve Kay. The United States Department of Energy (DOE) federal coordinator present was Myrna Redfield. Also present were the following members of the public and employees, contractors, and subcontractors of the DOE: Joni Arends, Jeannie Brandstetter, Jacqueline Cabasso, Vina Colley, Shelley Hawkins, Dennis Hill, Pat Hopper, Marilea Kelly, Jim Key, Tom Marshall, Jimmy Massey, Don Moniak, Al Puckett, Harry Rogers, and Alice Slater.

Agenda

Steve Kay called the meeting to order and asked if there were any modifications to the agenda. Mark Donham said members from the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability (ANA) were visiting the meeting and proposed that comments from members of the group be added to the agenda. Dennis Hill suggested having a standing place in the agenda for public comments from guests visiting the SSAB meetings. It was proposed to add this before the meeting minutes. There were no objections to the agenda.

Minutes

The minutes from July 16, 1998, and August 20, 1998, were approved by the SSAB.

Environmental Management and Enrichment Facilities Project Updates

Members received a handout on the Environmental Management and Enrichment Facilities (EMEF) updates. Myrna Redfield said the DOE is working with the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection (KDPE) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on lumping some projects together; therefore, the updates might look different in the future. She said the SSAB would be briefed on this during next month's meeting. Donham asked if this referred to a combined plan. Redfield said this relates to the comments received on the Accelerating Cleanup Plan. Donham asked if there was any chance the DOE would look at the cumulative effects of all the projects before remediation. Redfield said the DOE is trying to combine similar operable units (e.g., groundwater, surface water, etc.) and perform a comprehensive evaluation to make sure contamination is not present after remediation. Donham asked if the evaluations would be performed before remediation. Redfield said all the remedial actions taken come under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and will be evaluated to make sure nothing was missed. She said this would be discussed further under the Accelerating Cleanup Plan next month. Donham said if National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) values were incorporated into CERCLA at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant (PGDP), the analysis should be done before remediation. Donham said he thinks the DOE is

misinterpreting laws and regulations.

Alliance for Nuclear Accountability Comments

Marilea Kelly, member of Tri-Valley Cares in California, said her organization works on the cleanup of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL). She said the LLNL has many of the same environmental problems as Paducah. Kelly said one of the things an SSAB can do is advocate for the best possible cleanup and insist that there be stable, long-term funding for that cleanup. Kelly said she was struck by the fact that the plume at the PGDP is moving one foot per day, which is faster than the migration at LLNL. She said Paducah also has fewer extraction wells than LLNL and stated that more wells for additional treatment would be good for Paducah. Kelly offered her assistance to the SSAB since her site is five years beyond the record of decision (ROD) stage. She said she has become a proponent for the ROD to state explicitly everything the community wants.

Mark D(?), from the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research in Maryland, said he has studied the problem of depleted uranium hexafluoride (UF_6). He said the number of cylinders at the PGDP should be a national problem, not just a local problem. He said the draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for depleted UF_6 was very unsatisfactory and that the country and community deserve much better. He said part of his organization's job is to assist community groups in dealing with these problems.

Don Moniak of Amarillo, Texas, said the tour of the plant September 16, 1998, was very good. Moniak said the amount of waste, however, was unbelievable. He said that the pump and treat operation was very clean and organized compared to the one at Pantex. Moniak said he did observe a few safety violations, though. He said some low-level waste was being moved and it looked like the waste was overflowing during transportation. He also said a criticality area was tagged as having "uncharacterized legacy equipment"; however, there was no equipment in this area and no one was able to account for the equipment.

Vina Colley of Portsmouth, Ohio, said she was concerned about the depleted UF_6 cylinders. She said her concern was about the uranium tails being recycled and that public input might be left out of the process.

Jacqueline Cabasso, executive director of Western States Legal Foundation in California, said it was shocking to see the extensive land taken by the cylinders. She also said she was concerned about the maintenance of the wildlife area. Cabasso said the paint on warning signs that were posted in 1992 was worn off. She asked how waste could continue to be produced when there is no disposal for the waste. Cabasso suggested that long-term institutional controls be placed on the PGDP's agenda.

Alice Slater from New York said she is concerned with the cleanup of the Brookhaven National Laboratory. She said during the tour of the PGDP, she also was shocked at the amount of waste. Slater said she hoped the waste in the scrap yards did not get recycled into everyday products such as frying pans, silverware, etc. Slater said there are rising cancer rates and statistics that these materials are very dangerous. She also said it was shocking how much the waste was getting moved around.

Tom Marshall, who works with the Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center in Boulder, Colorado,

extended an invitation to the SSAB to visit the Rocky Flats SSAB. Marshall serves as the chair of the Rocky Flats SSAB.

Al Puckett, former PGDP worker and resident of Kevil, said he was very concerned about the depleted UF_6 cylinders at the plant. He said some of the cylinders are rusted and thin-walled and he did not think a coat of paint would hold the contents.

Vortec Update

Redfield said the project team still is working on addressing internal comments on the Vortec Environmental Assessment (EA). She recommended that Vortec be kept on the agenda. Craig Rhodes said he would like more information on the research and portions used in the Vortec flux. He said his questions from previous meetings were not answered satisfactorily. Donham asked where the glass frit produced would be disposed if Vortec does operate. Redfield said it would go to a disposal facility; however, it would have to meet the waste acceptance criteria of the facility chosen. Jimmy Massey said the DOE has shipped waste to EnviroCare in Hanford, the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, and the Toxic Substances Control Act incinerator in Oak Ridge. Donham asked if any of the 50,000 barrels of legacy waste that Vortec had been proposed to treat were being shipped offsite. Redfield said some shipments have gone out and some are projected for shipment next year. She said Vortec originally was going to treat only about 80 percent of the waste and that there are treatment and disposal activities going on in waste management currently. Donham asked if there was a deadline for treatment of the barrels if Vortec does not get built. Redfield said legacy waste is projected to be disposed of by the year 2006 according to the Accelerating Cleanup Plan. Ronald Lamb asked if there was some cap on how much waste can be contained at the facility or if there were deadlines on disposal. Massey said there are various federal facility compliance agreements that call for characterization of the waste by certain dates. Lamb said it seemed there was a driver for getting rid of a lot of waste quickly. Donham asked about the waste from filter sludges and said some levels were high in transuranic waste. He asked if this still was classified as low-level waste and said he thought there were considerably more barrels of filter sludge from the precipitation tanks in C-400. Donham said he was concerned about this waste being treated through Vortec. Massey said uranium precipitate, or filter cake, is generated by the United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC) and is not a wastestream the DOE manages. He said the characterization he saw on the barrels was not transuranic. Massey said he would bring information on characterization of the barrels at the next meeting.

Depleted Uranium Hexafluoride Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement Budget

Hill said the meeting date for the depleted UF_6 workshop has been changed to October 7, 1998, in Lexington, Kentucky. This meeting will be followed by the regulator meeting October 8, 1998. Donham asked about the bill introduced to Congress by Mitch McConnell on budget for the depleted UF_6 cylinders. He said that \$385 million would not be enough to build full conversion facilities at Portsmouth and Paducah. Jim Key, representative of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union, said that he and David Fuller had been lobbying for the bill in June and additional funding was requested. Key said that if the \$385 million was used, additional funding could be discussed with legislators. He said the House had already cut additional funding for the DOE the day he and Fuller requested additional funding. Lamb asked how many jobs the facilities would create. Key said about 125 to 200 jobs would be created for 10 or 15 years at Paducah and Portsmouth. He said this would

lessen the economic impacts of layoffs. Redfield said Jimmie Hodges and Greg Bazzell are working on a plan that will be presented to Congress. Donham asked Key if the money designated in the bill would be used to convert the USEC cylinders created since 1992. Key said it is the laborer's opinion that it did not matter what waste would be converted because it all needs to go to conversion, starting with the oldest cylinders first. Kay asked if there was limitation to this funding. Massey said, yes, and that the funding does not address DOE legacy cylinders before 1993. Donham said the older cylinders may not be able to be heated to the degree needed for conversion. Massey said the life of the paint on the cylinders is 10 to 15 years. The member of ANA asked how long it would be until the community gets input on the construction plan. Redfield said she is not aware of the timeframe; however, it would be fairly soon. Donham asked Key if treatment was onsite for handling wastewater from the cylinder wash. Key said part of the conversion process will have some different wastewater treatment for that purpose. He said there are conceptual designs for treatment of the water. Donham asked what would happen with the actual cylinders. He said the PEIS states that the cylinders may not be marketable because of the uranium. Key said he did not think the issue had been addressed.

Northeast and Northwest Plume Pump and Treat Facilities

Bill Tanner said he contacted hydrogeologists who could review the pump and treat process. Tanner said he would bring extra copies of resumes from the hydrogeologists for the SSAB. He contacted Jeff Douthitt, former hydrogeologist of Bechtel Jacobs Company LLC, who was involved in the initial investigations of the remediation. Tanner said he also would like to contact someone who was not involved in the process to present an opposing view. Ray McLennan asked if anything would be accomplished by having an opposing opinion. He said he was not convinced that pump and treat has done anything substantial. He said the money might have been better spent for remediation of the source. Kay said the SSAB is empowered to provide advice to the regulators as well as to the DOE. Lamb asked why the Water Policy was part of the agenda. Tanner replied that he suggested bringing in people who were affected by the Water Policy to provide information and fresh ideas on things that needed to be presented to the DOE. Linda Long said the SSAB had been told previously that pump and treat was not very effective and wondered why it has continued. Gregory Waldrop said the CRES group, which is funded by the DOE, made a presentation at the SSAB National Conference in Boulder, Colorado. He said the group has done extensive research on when to stop or when to continue pump and treat. Waldrop said the SSAB could probably request research from the group.

Waste Area Group 22, Solid Waste Management Units 7 and 30

Nola Courtney said she had reviewed the Feasibility Study (FS) comment response summary and the resolution meeting has been scheduled for October 14, 1998. She said the KDEP had commented that Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 were not acceptable. She said the EPA had questions on why no consideration was given to either full or limited removal of nonhazardous waste presently stored in the subsurface of the solid waste management units (SWMUs). She said the DOE maintains that what is hazardous at this point is exposure to workers. The KDEP believes the alternatives that decrease toxicity of the waste and provide permanent solutions should be carried throughout the process. The KDEP also recommends the DOE remove contaminated scrap metal from adjacent SWMUs because they are the source of surface contamination. Courtney said additional sampling had been conducted in June and July 1998 and should be available now. Massey said transmittal on the sampling was signed recently and results should be out next week. Courtney said the KDEP questions the practicality of the DOE

trying to secure land and deed restrictions because of the longevity of some of the materials. Courtney said lateral subsurface migration was the main area of discussion during comment resolution. She said the basis of disagreement is the contamination from surface soil, subsurface soil, and groundwater. She said the DOE stated that migration from these areas was not a concern, but the KDEP is not convinced. Donham asked if excavation was not an alternative anymore. Redfield said, it was not, based on the data available. Donham said that at the FS stage, excavation needs to be considered. He said NEPA values are not being incorporated if this is not considered. Redfield said she would have to defer Donham's comments to the project team. She said excavation could have been screened out in the process when considering other technologies and would check on what happened to the alternative for Donham. Donham said the alternatives presented are driven by budget decisions based on the Accelerating Cleanup Plan. He said the PGDP has never gotten the money that other sites have. Donham requested that he be put back on the distribution list to receive copies of all the documents. Donham made a proposal that the SSAB recommend to the DOE that excavation be considered as a fifth alternative and provide the SSAB with the costs and environmental effects of the alternative. Additionally, it was requested that the DOE investigate applicable or relevant and appropriate technologies to remediate hazardous waste. The recommendation was approved by consensus.

Training Options for the SSAB

This discussion was postponed until the next meeting so everyone would have a chance to review the options presented in the Government Institutes' Environmental, Health & Safety Training Opportunities Catalog which was received at the August 20, 1998, meeting and sent by mail to members who were not present at that meeting.

DOE Response to SSAB Recommendations

Redfield said the only pending response is on the Vortec EA which was addressed earlier in the meeting.

SSAB Work Plan

The SSAB Work Plan was updated. Courtney said membership issues should be placed on the work plan for next June so an advertisement for membership can be placed in the newspaper. Waldrop said one issue that came up at the SSAB National Conference was the importance of public involvement with the SSAB. Waldrop asked that a category be included in the work plan for public outreach. Waldrop also said that comments on the depleted UF₆ PEIS need to be sent in soon so the comment period will not be missed. Vicki Jones asked Waldrop about the status of wildlife survey conducted by Charlie Logsdon that was an effort for public outreach by the SSAB. Waldrop said Logsdon moved to Eastern Kentucky around the end of the study. Jones agreed to check on the status of the survey.

Financial Update

Hill said the total cost spent to date by the SSAB is \$38,491. He said the closeout of the fiscal year (FY) is the end of September. The budget request for next year is \$100,000. Hill said there also is money for Kay's contract and travel. Redfield said the travel money, which will stay in the budget, began at about \$37,000 and only two trips were charged to that this year. McLennan asked if the money that was not

spent by the SSAB would get turned back into the DOE. Redfield said the money comes out of the program for Paducah. Waldrop said every dollar the SSAB spends is a dollar that cannot be used for cleanup. McLennan asked about the level of funding and whether the money would be kept in Paducah. Redfield said the money would stay in Paducah if it were not used by the SSAB.

SSAB Membership

Courtney said the following four membership terms expire this month: Mark Donham, Ronald Lamb, Linda Long, and Connie Sykes. She said Lynn Lane recently resigned with possibly two years remaining on her term. Courtney proposed that everyone's membership term be carried through September so the terms would be consistent. Courtney said she knew Donham wanted to renew his membership, but was not sure about the others. She recommended writing Sykes a letter to see if she wanted to renew since she had not been attending the meetings for a while. She said policy states the SSAB may consider absenteeism in termination of memberships. Courtney asked for volunteers to be on the membership committee with her and Waldrop volunteered. It was proposed to renew all four memberships if the members up for renewal desired to do so. There were no objections to this proposal. For additional membership recruitment, Waldrop suggested contacting Ballard County officials, the Chamber of Commerce, retired plant workers, etc. It was also suggested that SSAB membership be offered to members of the Environmental Advisory Committee. Waldrop asked if a list of names from this committee could be provided to him. Courtney said an advertisement for membership needs to be placed in the newspaper. Hill said he would see about running the advertisement this month so it could be included in the FY 1998 budget.

The next meeting will be held October 15, 1998, at the Information Age Park Resource Center at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was adjourned.

Tentative agenda for the October 15, 1998, meeting:

- Public Comments from Guests
- Minutes
- Information (Handouts)
- EMEF Project Updates
- Vortec Update
- Depleted UF₆ PEIS Budget Update
- WAG 6 Remedial Investigation Report
- Federal Facilities Agreement Strategies
- Accelerating Cleanup Plan — Paths to Closure
- 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 Work Plan
- Financial Update
- SSAB Membership

Action Items

- Provide Craig Rhodes with information on the research and portions used in the Vortec flux.
- Provide SSAB with characterization on uranium precipitate or filter cake barrels generated by the USEC.
- Provide SSAB with results of additional sampling on SWMUs 7 and 30 of WAG 22.
- Provide Mark Donham with explanation of why excavation on SWMUs 7 and 30 of WAG 22 was not included as an alternative in the FS.
- Place Mark Donham back on the distribution list to receive copies of all deliverable documents. (done)
- SSAB members need to review or bring a copy of the Government Institutes' Environmental, Health & Safety Training Opportunities Catalog to the next meeting to discuss training options.
- Vicki Jones check on the status of the Charlie Logsdon hunter's survey.
- Provide membership committee with names of members from the Environmental Advisory Committee.
- Send media advisory to the newspaper concerning membership search for the SSAB. (done)