

To: Citizen Task Force
From: Melinda Holland, Clean Sites
Subject: Summary of August 19, 1997, Meeting
Date: August 26, 1997

Next Meeting:

The next Citizen Task Force (CTF) meeting will be on:

Date: Wednesday September 3, 1997
Time: 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Location: Ashford Office Complex
9030 Route 219, West Valley, NY

If you have questions or comments regarding the upcoming meeting or about this summary, please contact Melinda Holland at (864) 457-4202, or Tom Attridge at (716) 942-2453.

CTF Attendees:

Attending were: Pete Scherer, Joe Patti, Ray Vaughan, Nevella McNeil, Elaine Belt, Paul Piciulo, Tom Rowland, Mary Sonntag (for Rich Tobe), Bob Potter (for Bill King), Larry Smith, Eric Wohlers, Blake Reeves, Warren Schmidt, and Pete Cooney. Not attending were: Lana Rosler, Rich Tobe, Bill King, and John Pfeffer.

Agency Attendees:

Jack Krajewski, NY State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)

Attending via video conference were:

Jack Parrott and Tim Johnson, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)
Joe Price, Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC)

August 19th Meeting Summary:

Tom Attridge began the meeting by addressing administrative issues. Melinda Holland reviewed the agenda with the CTF and requested comments on the August 6th Meeting Summary. Comments on the Meeting Summary included a disagreement with page 3, last sentence of the first full paragraph which read "Consistent with NRC decommissioning requirements, Alternative III relies on indefinite institutional controls, however, no credit was taken for

institutional controls beyond 100 years in the performance assessment.” The objection was to the implication that indefinite institutional controls would be consistent with NRC decommissioning requirements. A revised summary is attached.

Tom Attridge announced that NYSERDA and DOE would like Murray Regan, Mayor of Springville, to fill the vacancy left by Dick Timm’s resignation from the CTF. Mr. Regan was recommended by Mr. Timm and has expressed enthusiasm for participating on the CTF and is willing to do the necessary “catch up” work. Also, the new Concord Town Supervisor, John Allen, was contacted by NYSERDA and supported the participation of Mr. Regan on the CTF. Mr. Attridge requested that anyone having questions or concerns over Mr. Regan replacing Mr. Timm should speak with him or Ms. Holland during the break. No concerns were raised at the meeting. Mr. Regan will be contacted and invited to attend the next CTF meeting.

Waste Management Area 2 - Low Level Waste Treatment Facility Area

The overview of the low level waste treatment facilities and wastes present in WMA 2 was provided by Joe Jablonski of WVNS. The summary of DEIS information for WMA 2 was presented by Jim Hammelman of SAIC. The responses to questions and issues raised by CTF members are summarized below.

Lagoon 1 was excavated into the sand and gravel layer and has resulted in some Strontium 90 contamination of shallow groundwater as is shown on the colored map used to illustrate the North Plateau plume [the map was handed out at the May 7th meeting]. The plume from Lagoon 1 shows concentrations of Strontium 90 in ground water from 1,000 to 10,000 picocuries per liter. Monitoring wells east (down gradient) of Lagoon 1 show steady or decreasing concentrations. Much of the groundwater from Lagoon 1 may end up in Lagoon 2 which is downgradient. A CTF member requested information on waste volumes which could result from exhumation of the lagoons and demolition of the building.

A concern was raised over the proximity of Lagoons 2 and 3 to a steep ravine to the east (Erdman Brook) making them at risk to erosion. The CTF member also mentioned that an earthquake could cause liquefaction of the area and result in the Lagoons sliding into the ravine area.

Increased occupational hazards may result from installation of erosion controls in the Buttermilk Creek area due to the steepness of the slopes and the slope stability, as well as the difficulty of operating machinery in that environment. These increased risks to workers were not taken into account in the DEIS but will be analyzed in the Supplemental EIS. These figures will be made available to the CTF when the analysis is complete.

The engineering designs for Lagoon 1 are being modified to include clay slurry walls around the lagoon area to the depth of the confining till layer. A new Low-Level Waste Treatment Facility

¹Copies of presentation materials may be obtained by calling Sonja Allen, WVNS, at [716] 942-2152.

(LLWTF) is under construction to replace the existing facility (also known as the O2 Building). The new LLWTF was needed due to the poor condition of the old facility. The existing O2 Building and lagoons have different amounts of radioactive contamination. As requested, information on the contaminants and concentrations found in WMA 2 is attached.

A CTF member asked if there were any State-designated wetlands in WMA 2. This information was not available at the meeting, but the DEIS has maps of the wetlands within the WVDP site boundary (see attached map).

Waste Management Areas 6, 10, 11, 12

The overview of WMAs 6, 10, 11, and 12 was provided by Joe Jablonski of WVNS. The summary of DEIS information for those WMAs was presented by Jim Hammelman of SAIC. Tom Attridge reviewed the history of the Cesium Project. The responses to questions and issues raised by CTF members are summarized below.

A CTF member pointed out that WMA 12 is generally considered to include the remainder of the site, (3,000 + acres) and that the EIS should address what will happen in the future with the 3,000+ acres which lie outside the WVDP site (200 acres). A discussion ensued over the need for the EIS process to consider more than the cleanup of the 200 acres of the WVDP site. One CTF member felt that NEPA² requires the EIS to consider issues related to cleanup and that future use is related to cleanup and closure. A reason for considering the 3,000+ acres in the analysis is the fact that certain types of future uses of the 3,000 acres could be incompatible with some of the cleanup alternatives proposed in the DEIS. The DEIS evaluated how much land will be available for reuse given the different alternatives. A CTF member stated that it was important for the CTF to understand the impact of each alternative on the amount of land available for reuse. Jim Hammelman stated that the DEIS scope did address land use impacts of the alternatives presented and what is needed to prepare the site for reuse, but did not try to specify future uses. A CTF member distributed for CTF consideration a list of issues/concerns/decision factors which touch on these issues. Several CTF members felt that the issue of future use of the land is important to the community and needed further discussion at a future meeting.

There was discussion over the difference between Alternative IIIA and IIIB for the Process Building and whether there are any advantages to one approach as compared to the other. Alternative III is the close-in-place option, the sub-alternatives A and B were developed as optional approaches considered for closing-in-place. Under Alternative IIIA, the building would be filled with grout to form a solid monolith. Under Alternative IIIB, the building would be

²The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is the Federal statute which requires that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be prepared for certain activities.

demolished and the rubble filled with grout and capped. A CTF member raised the concern that void spaces might exist within the rubble, even with the grout. Another member added that the end product of IIIA and IIIB will look different externally, which could be an aesthetic consideration for future uses of the area around the site.

A CTF member suggested that the site consider the findings of a Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) study from the 1970s on the potential impacts of earthquake on buildings at West Valley. He felt that the impacts of earthquake on waste storage or disposal facilities which might remain at West Valley after closure should be looked at more closely and that any analysis at West Valley should be as sophisticated as the LLNL analysis.

Some discussion ensued over how some closure alternatives could be incompatible with other alternatives. For example, cleaning up the source of the North Plateau Groundwater Plume might be incompatible with Alternative III, close-in-place, for the Process Building. However, phosphate stabilization (if proven effective) could be used to stop the movement of the plume and would be compatible with Alternative III. A combination alternative is a likely outcome for the site as a whole. Site representatives stated that it is important for the CTF to begin to look at the relationships between alternatives as applied at different parts of the site. The use of an alternative at one WMA may preclude or encourage the use of other alternatives at other parts of the site.

WMA 3 - Follow-up Questions and Issues

A CTF member expressed concerns over the presentation on the re-engineering of WMA 3 which indicated that the projected dose dropped by six orders of magnitude. He is concerned over the validity of those projections. Under Alternative III he felt it would be very difficult to successfully seal off the tanks from groundwater for 1,000 to 10,000 years. Of special concern is the ability to successfully seal the bottoms of the tanks from contact with groundwater. Gully erosion and seismic impacts also remain a serious concern over these long time frames. He encouraged more rigorous study on the potential impacts of seismic disturbances. Due to the lack of time remaining at this meeting, site representatives agreed to respond in more detail at the next meeting. The next objective summarized the recommendations in those calculations were based on the use of the new type of reducing grout and absorbents, design improvements, and improved washing and cleaning technologies for the tanks.

High-Level Waste Tank Workshop

Elizabeth Lowes announced that DOE would pay travel and expenses for one CTF member to attend a DOE workshop on High-Level Waste Tanks to be held in Salt Lake City, Utah on October 7 & 8. An agenda for the meeting will be provided to the CTF as soon as it is available. The following CTF members expressed an interest in attending: Larry Smith, Tim Siepel, Nevella McNeil, Blake Reeves, and Pete Scherer. Rich Tobe and Ray Vaughan were suggested as potential attendees by other CTF members. All were asked to check their calendars and at the next meeting select a preferred way of choosing one person to attend.

Observer Comments

An observer reminded the site and CTF to consider an endangered species, the Rose Pink plant, when they consider closure options for the reservoir, which is where they are found.

A question was asked about the use of contaminated material from the old hard-stand area to fill Lagoon 1. A site representative responded that the contaminants from that fill were taken into consideration in the DEIS.

Another observer suggested that other agencies might be interested in acquiring the land for public uses; such agencies might include: the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, NYS Office of Historic Preservation, NYSDEC Parks or Forests Division, and local government and planning agencies.

Next Steps

- Complete question and answers from WMA 3
- Provide a draft of the next phase of the CTF process at the September 3 meeting and discuss

Attachments

- Table showing volumes, substances, level of activity, etc. on the wastes located in the Lagoons in WMA 2
- Map showing location of wetlands on site
- Revised meeting summary from the August 6th meeting

