Detailed Meeting Notes
Hamilton Army Airfield Restoration Advisory Board
Novato Police Station Meeting Room
Novato, California
July 14, 2004

Attendance

RAB Members Present:

Ed Keller; Jennifer Valenzia; Preston Cook; Joan Dekelboum; Jeff Johnston; Richard Draeger;; Mathew McCarron; William McNicholas; Naomi Feger; Laurent Meillier; Lance McMahan; Theresa McGarry; Jim McAlister

RAB Members Absent:

Tunstall Lang; Marucia Britto;; Sue Latanzio; Manuel Meir; Ross Millerick; Sabrina Mollinari; Ray Zimny; Patricia Eklund

Others Present:

Eric Polson; Joy Lanzaro; Hugh Ashley; Daniel LaForte; Juanita LaFond; Jim Davies; Delia Hitz; Liz Barr; Travis Williamson; Gina Lynch

Welcoming Remarks

Ed Keller welcomed the community to the July 14, 2004 meeting of the Hamilton Army Airfield Restoration Advisory Board (RAB). The meeting began at 7:10 p.m.

Navy BRAC Update: Jennifer Valenzia, DODHF Novato BEC

Ms. Valenzia introduced her presentation on the Navy's responses to two sites: the NEX gas station, and the Navy Ballfields. She also presented an update on the current biosparging treatment system.

The property located at C Street and Main Gate Road (the location of the Hamilton-NEX gas station) was originally intended to be sold to the City of Novato. Negotiations between the City and the Navy were not successful, and the City withdrew its bid on June 1, 2004. The Navy has renamed the property "Hamilton Square" and will be advertising the public sale of the property in area newspapers and magazines beginning July 26, 2004. A fact sheet on the property will be prepared and sent to interested parties in the week of July 26, 2004. This property is intended for industrial/commercial use.

Mr. Cook: What is the reason that the city did not pursue the purchase of this property?

Ms. Valenzia: As I understand it, there was a negotiated sale for the City to purchase the property at a discounted rate of around $800,000. The NEX gas station formerly occupied the site. The Navy had cleaned up the property so that it would be suitable for commercial and industrial uses, but there are some soil management measures required during the construction on the property. The City wanted a discount in order to cover the costs for the soil management during future construction on the site. The Navy was not willing to negotiate. I can provide a phone number of someone who can discuss this in more detail.

Mr. McCarron: This is the site where the three tanks were pulled? Has the parcel received closure from Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) for the tank removals?

Ms. Valenzia: Yes all USTs were removed and soil and groundwater were treated on the Hamilton Square property and the agencies support that the property is suitable for commercial uses. However, although the RWQCB oversaw the UST removals, the "site" is not closed because of the ongoing treatment near the former PWC Gas Station.

Sale Specifics

There will be a sale in early August, and we will set up a sales office in mid-August. We have planned four open-houses, or tours, of the property by appointment only. The property will be auctioned, and we expect to close escrow in January 2005.

Mr. Cook: What are terms of the sale based on the negotiations with the City? Do you anticipate having similar problems as you had with the City in regards to these environmental issues?

Ms. Valenzia: No, we do not anticipate having similar problems with other buyers.

Mr. Cook: Do you believe that the site is ready for the purchase and development? What about continued remediation?

Ms. Valenzia: There isn't any active remediation at the gas station parcel at this time. The current remediation system addresses the area to the north. At the gas station parcel, there was soil removal, tank removal, and the implementation of an air sparging soil vapor extraction system that treated the high concentration areas on that parcel. There are some residual gasoline constituents remaining in the soil, but according to the risk assessment, the site is acceptable for commercial and industrial uses. However, when you reach a certain depth there will be some soil management required, and that is the part the City was unhappy about.

Mr. Cook: Then the Navy would have a no further action disclaimer on it, backed by other agencies such as the RWQCB. Is this correct?

Ms. Valenzia: Yes. In addition, if an unknown circumstance emerges, the Navy retains the cleanup responsibility.

Ms. McGarry: We do have documentation in place that documents the condition of that property. We signed a land use covenant with the Navy that would restrict residential uses on the property. If construction goes below five feet, the developer is obligated to present a soils management plan to the DTSC and RWQCB. They may have to complete some testing, and if anything is found, it would need to be disposed of properly. We are very aware of the condition of the property, we have the documentation approved by the regulatory agencies, and that includes RWQCB and DTSC. When the Navy auctions this property, they will confide that information to the public, so that the public will know that there are restrictions on this property.

Mr. Cook: Could you delineate the site? Do you know what the size is, in square feet or acres?

Ms. Valenzia: The site is a little over two acres.

Mr. Cook: What about the disposition of the property at the north end?

Ms. Valenzia: That property is intended to go to the Novato Unified School District (NUSD).

Mr. Cook: Has NUSD been negotiating with the Navy about not accepting that parcel?

Ms. Valenzia: No, actually that is a different type of conveyance called a Public Benefit Conveyance, so we are essentially giving them property. That is where our active treatment system is located.

Mr. Cook: I would like to direct this question to the RWQCB member: Has the RWQCB signed off on this parcel that no further action is necessary?

Mr. Meillier: We are currently reviewing the FOST for the area. The tenants haven't received closure. We expect that the Navy will provide data to us. The Navy must conclude that the plume is not a hazard to sensitive receptors.

Ms. McGarry: This area will be transferred to the school district. State law says the Department of Toxics must have a special department that oversees environmental evaluations for any parcels intended for school use. I may not be the final person to sign off on this parcel; it will most likely be the DTSC Schools Program. The school district must do their own environmental evaluation, compile all of the information that is available from the Navy, and present it to our Schools Program. They will make the final decision on whether or not this parcel is suitable for school use. We envision that this property will have some environmental use restrictions, and at a minimum there will be groundwater pumping restrictions, and there could be some areas of soil restriction. We are just beginning the process.

Mr. Cook: Will encapsulation be a requirement before it is used by the school district? Some kind of cover—concrete or asphalt—is that necessary?

Ms. McGarry: There was a risk assessment conducted that looked at soil gas data because that was the main concern associated with the plume. At the time we felt that it was within the range of acceptable risk. However, we are now reevaluating that data with the current data because concentrations have decreased. Primarily, we are worried about people living on the surface and being exposed to soil gas vapors. There may be some areas with petroleum contamination, and, like the sale area parcel, once construction goes below a certain level, there may need to be some kind of soil management. This is more for the protection of the excavation or construction worker. All of this will be evaluated again, not only by DoDHF BRAC, but also by our Schools Program, so there would be two sets of analysis for this parcel.

Ms. Valenzia: I'd like to make one clarification: the sale area parcel, which is going to be named Hamilton Square, is not the parcel Ms. McGarry was talking about.

Mr. Cook: Do you have a minimum bid price for this parcel?

Ms. Valenzia: I don't know.

Mr. Cook: Your sales brochure is coming out after the property is being marketed for sale. This is a reversal of the usual property sale schedule, and the Navy may want to reconsider this. You may have some frustrated buyers.

Ms. Valenzia: Your comment is noted. The General Services Administration is managing the sale of this property rather than by my office..
Mr. Davies: Regarding your earlier questions about transfer costs for the school parcel, there is a restriction on soils management. When you take the building down there is contamination under the foundations. The soils management plan will determine how to best address the soil contamination issues. The estimated cost for the soils management plan and remediation is over $300,000. That is the primary reason the City did not pursue the property. There will be post-transfer costs.

Ms. Valenzia continued with her presentation on the biosparging system. These comments are a little out of order from the handout. We have an active treatment system in place for the gas station on the south end of the parcel, the sale area parcel, and north of that, at the PWC gas station, where a release was also reported. The gasoline constituents have melded together and are not considered two distinct areas. We treated the southern area, and that treatment concluded in November 1999. We are now treating the other gas station, which is located a little up-gradient. The focus of our treatment system is in the specific "hot spot" area. Our biosparging system focuses on a very specific area, but the plume map shows that MTBE concentrations extend beyond that area.

Brief History of Biosparging Operation

The biosparging operation began in September 2002, and was anticipated to meet the performance goals in 18 months. The system has now been operating for 22 months. The system was optimized several times, meaning that the Navy has made adjustments to further reduce contaminants. As anticipated, there have been fluctuations in MTBE concentrations. Due to the heterogeneity of the subsurface, some areas are easier to treat than others. As of June 2004, the overall MTBE concentration has decreased by 80 percent.

Ms. Valenzia gave a description of biosparging technology. Biosparging is pushing air into the ground to feed the subsurface bacteria that in turn consume the MTBE and control petroleum contamination.

[Ms. Valenzia now gave a visual demonstration of how the biosparging treatment reacts differently to permeable and less-permeable soil types]. We often say in our presentations and in our reports that certain areas are more effective than others. We believe that there is an historic creekbed underneath the plume. The plume migrates to

the north; this area is a more permeable channel. We have mentioned in previous presentations that there are bedrock areas to the east and west of the plume, and this is why we don't see a lateral migration of the plume, while it is moving north. Our treatment system involves 49 sparge wells. These wells are air injection points. We monitor eight wells on a monthly basis. As we expected in the more permeable channel, we have noted higher MTBE removal. In less permeable areas, the treatment is less effective because it is more difficult for air to penetrate the soil.

Ms. Valenzia noted that the Navy is reaching a point in the treatment system where they have removed or reduced the MTBE concentrations as much as possible, and that removal data has stabilized.

Summary of Sampling Interval

We monitor eight of the performance wells monthly. In addition, we have a quarterly monitoring program that involves a larger number of wells. Since we last met, we've collected samples in April, May, June and July. Quarterly samples were collected last May and we will be collecting quarterly samples in August. Results are reported in a semi-annual report referred to as the Site Status report, which is a summary of the information we have collected.

The goal of the treatment system is to stabilize and contain the MTBE plume on the Navy property. The treatment is biosparging with soil vapor extraction contingency, which is basically injecting air into the ground, enhancing the natural degradation of petroleum contaminants. The goal is to lower the MTBE concentrations and reduce the time required to achieve drinking water standards.

The original performance goal of the biosparging system was a 95-99 percent reduction of dissolved MTBE in the ground water. The current level of removal is approximately 80 percent. However, we estimated that the MTBE concentration levels would be much higher when we first designed the treatment system. The actual concentrations in groundwater were 57 percent lower than what the Navy had originally estimated.

Other goals include:

- Establish a stable or shrinking plume on the Navy property.
- Achieve asymptotic removal after appropriate optimization of the biosparging system.
- Operate as long as the treatment is cost-effective.

Quarterly Groundwater Monitoring Results: MTBE and Benzene Concentrations

In November 1996, the average MTBE concentration was 73,568 parts per billion (ppb). The average concentration in performance goal wells in the higher concentration areas is 2,551 ppb. A 97 percent reduction has been achieved between November 1996 and May 2004. The average benzene concentration started at 2930 ppb, and now concentrations are around 7 ppb.

Question: What was the reduction that the graph represented?

Ms. Valenzia: A 97 percent reduction if you compare that average to the one in May 1996 in the hot spot area.

[Ms. Valenzia displayed another graph showing a similar trend] The maximum concentration detected in the plume in November 1996 is 240,000 ppb; the current maximum detected is 20,000 ppb. The maximum concentration of benzene is 12,000 ppb in November 1996 and is now closer to 200 ppb.

Treatment began in September 2002 for the eight monitoring wells and there has been an overall 80 percent reduction as a result of treatment. Regarding actual versus estimated MTBE concentrations, the initial average concentration was 13,000 ppb, representing a reduction of 87 percent from the original estimate. In the sand channel there has been an 84 percent reduction in loose soils and 75 percent reduction in compacted soils.

A question was asked at the last meeting about the fluctuations in concentration of monitoring data, and whether an increase in MTBE concentration signifies additional contamination or ineffective treatment. These measurements are like your heart beat: they fluctuate. We are looking for bigger picture trends. Also, the measurements are in parts per billion, which are very small amounts. So when we see increases in ppb, it is actually only a small increment. Measurements are measured in microgram per liter (µg /L) These conversions will help explain what the concentrations mean: 1µg /L = 1 ppb; 1,000 µg/L = 1 ppm; 1 ppm = 1,000 ppb. These are very small concentrations. So, although the plume appears very large on the map it contains very small concentrations. How do we make sense of a part per million or part per billion?

Another way to visualize a part per million is:

- One inch in 16 miles
- One minute in two years
- One cent in 10,000 dollars.

Another way to visualize a part per billion is:

- One inch in 16,000 miles
- One second in 32 years
- One cent in 10 million dollars.

The long term goals are to obtain drinking water standards. Through active treatment and natural systems this goal can be achieved in about 15 years. In addition, by reducing concentration we are preventing further water degradation to surrounding areas, per RWQCB standards.

Mr. Johnston: How effective is the biosparging system in the residential area?

Ms. Valenzia: It has no effect on these areas. The MTBE is already degrading through natural processes. Trends are decreasing even without biosparging.

Mr. Johnston: Are those concentrations low enough to warrant biosparging?

Ms. Valenzia: We think that even the "hot spot area" can eventually be used for drinking water.

Mr. Johnston: There has been confusion about the Shea Homes disclosure documents. That kind of document upsets people.

Ms. Valenzia: Concentrations have leveled off. At the last meeting we discussed a risk evaluation conducted by the DTSC for Pacheco Creek, which found that concentrations in those areas do not pose a significant risk to people in the area.

Ms Valenzia described the next steps:

- Continue monthly groundwater sampling. The next quarterly event will occur in August. There will be a meeting with regulatory agencies tomorrow to discuss next steps with biosparging system.
- A work plan was submitted for the Navy ballfield. Confirmation was received from RWQCB and confirmation from DTSC is expected by next week. We hope to finalize the work plan by this fall.

Mr. McCarron: What do the regulatory agencies need from you to turn off the biosparging system?

Ms. Valenzia: They want to see our measurements over time and see specifications on how to reduce concentrations.

Mr. Meillier: The major issues are 1) what are the impacts to water quality, 2) how can the total volume of water be increased over time, and 3) what are the potential alternatives without the biosparging system that would be more efficient?

We have asked for other documentation, data, as well, such as what does the plume look like and how has the plume changed over time? How has the connectivity changed? How has the reduction changed over time? How do concentrations relate - is the well fractured? Have we removed the source and how can we be sure? Are we sure that we removed the source and there are no other tanks in the area? We will be looking at all of these issues.

Ms. Valenzia: Turning off the biosparging system it is not the end of treatment. Even after it's been turned off it will be kept in place. We will continue to have a presence and will phase it out.

FUDS Updates: Jim McAlister, Project Manager for Landfill 26 and North Antenna Field

Mr. McAlister provided an update on recent methane monitoring at Landfill 26 and the status of the documentation, and issues involving the North Antenna Field.

Landfill 26

At the end of June we monitored gas probes around the Landfill and the southern end of the buffer zones and probes in Shea Homes development. Soil gas does not follow a plume (as with water contamination). Readings around the perimeter of the Landfill are less than 0.1 percent. The methane seen in the Shea Homes area is naturally occurring. The trench would vent methane coming from the Landfill, but the readings are not showing evidence of methane. So we are confident methane is not coming from the Landfill, but occurring from the higher concentrations of organic materials in the soils because these detections are seasonal. We believe the readings will go down in the winter.

In the past, Lot 30 has had higher detection readings. The last time we were on Lot 30 there appeared to be a large hole at the location where the probe used to be on the Shea Homes property. The consultant for Shea Homes investigated the situation and his initial reaction was that the probe had been destroyed. However, the person involved with the grading for Shea Homes further investigated the area and found that the probe had gotten buried and is still there.

Readings on most of the trench vents was less than 0.1. Readings on trench vents 3 and 4 were 0.24 percent. Our consultant took readings for Quarterly monitoring results of the trench vents. Nearly all of the readings registered near 0.5 percent, with the highest reading at 1.25 percent.

Landfill 26 Document Status

- Methane Investigation Report: Reaffirms the assertion that naturally occurring methane is located south of the Landfill. Stakeholders and agencies commented on the report. The Army's responses to the comments are currently undergoing legal review because of a lawsuit by Shea Homes against the Army. Once this has been cleared up the Army will release responses to the comments.
- Landfill 26 Comprehensive Monitoring Report: The agencies have provided comments on this report. The army is currently preparing comments and the report should be ready in the next few weeks.
- Monitoring Risk Assessment Probes: Continue to quarterly monitor risk assessment probes in the Hamilton meadows area per risk assessment guidelines. Monitor results show there is a decrease in risk in the area.
- Monitoring of Trench to meet Air Quality Management District standards.
- Regional Board Order Compliance: The Board has issued orders on the Landfill. The scheduled deadlines for the tasks contained in the Board orders were discussed with the RWQCB and the Army is in compliance from 2005-2008 for the tasks in the orders.

Mr. Davies: When will the Methane Investigation Report go out?

Mr. McAlister: It's under legal review. I hope in the next few weeks, but I can't give you a specific date.

Mr. Davies: Did you present for the last quarter?

Mr. McAlister: End of June.

Mr. Davies: Have the values been higher than what you showed for last quarter?

McAlister: Between Landfill 26 and the buffer trench, a couple of probes - GMP 26 and BMP 27 - showed higher levels of methane. Two months after the trench was installed, readings showed less than 0.1 percent.

Mr. Davies: Was it above 5 percent?

Mr. McAlister: GMP 26 got into the mid-teens and GMP 27 was 12 percent, but that is much lower now. GMP 30 continues to show high levels of naturally occurring methane during the summer months.

North Antenna Field:

We are currently in the risk assessment phase and the agencies have asked us to look at background numbers. We did that and that data is currently under regulatory review. Once we have comments back from the agencies we can work them into a workplan. We hope to have the risk assessment finalized in March next year.

Mr. McAlister gave a summary of the ordnance issues. A couple of practice grenades were found in the area. A work plan needs to be created to further investigate the issues. A large trench plate was placed over one grenade so no one can access it.

Mr. McNicholas: Why not destroy ordnance, instead of using a plate?

Mr. McAlister: A work plan is required for a contractor to legally destroy the grenade.

Mr. McNicholas: So no additional response is needed in the future for other explosives found?

Mr. McAlister: For this item, no. We need to go through the entire area to see if we find anything else.

California State Coastal Conservancy Wetlands Project Update: Eric Polson

Mr. Polson provided an update on the wetland restoration project on Hamilton Field.

During the spring of 2004, all of the buildings on the airfield were demolished or removed except the BRAC office. The next steps are the test fill on the levee by Outparcel A4 which will be monitored for a year. From this data and monitoring we will determine how the wetlands will be situated next to the levee. We want to make sure project activities do not adversely affect the levee, homes, or businesses.

One of the features of the wetlands project is the Bay Trail which is located on the perimeter of the project area. Other project features are construction of the Bulge and the Pacheco pond levees. Construction of the Bulge levee will tie into the existing New Hamilton Partner levee up to Pacheco Pond. It will act as a buffer so we can finish the

seasonal wetlands fill. The Pacheco pond levee will modify and improve the existing levee along the face of Pacheco Pond. These activities will begin in August or September.

The Army will also remove low level DDT soils. These low levels of DDT do not pose a risk to human health. The ROD/RAP mandated management of DDT contaminants that could be a potential risk to wildlife receptors in the tidal wetlands. We will move DDT soils to the seasonal wetlands area after we build the levees and import 6-10 ft of soils on top to create seasonal wetlands. These are very low levels of DDT, and only a potential risk to very sensitive wetlands species.

The conceptual designs and environmental documents have been completed. We hope to get necessary approval and then work on specific designs.

We are also working on the relocation of the Novato dechlorination treatment plant. We are working with Novato Sanitation District to establish a design for this. By Fall 2005, we would like to construct a new treatment plant and abandon and demolish the old one.

Next steps for 2004-2005:

1. Construct the N1 levee
2. Construct portions of the N2 levee
3. Complete the seasonal wetlands fills (Fall 05)

Ms. McGarry: What about the Navy Ballfields?

Mr. Polson: The original plan was to have a seasonal wetlands there, assuming we had the property. The original plan was also to complete the tidal wetlands first and then the seasonal wetlands. If we had the property we would do both of them first. But because of delays in property transfers and also delays in the Port of Oakland project we had to pursue the seasonal wetlands first.

Ms. McGarry: Do you need the northern levees?

Mr. Polson: Yes. We need the levees because the Novato Sanitary District continues to need access to the outfall (pipeline). We may need to relocate or realign the pipe at some point and the levees may be needed for relocation. The original plan was to have a hydrologic separation between the two different kinds of wetlands.

Ms. McGarry: Will the pipeline be constructed when the levee goes in?

Mr. Polson: This may be done in conjunction with building the levee or maybe later. It will cost 10 million dollars if we must relocate the pipe. Perhaps the Novato Sanitary District can do other things with that outfall. We are considering other options to relocating the pipe.

Our overall goal for fall 2005 is to relocate the NSD dechlorination plant and receive dredge material from the Port of Oakland. The budget for the project for fiscal year 2005 includes $5 million in federal funding and $1.7 million in state funding. State funding may susceptible to more risk.

Mr. McNicholas: Is there funding for the 5-mile pipeline that carries dredge material?

Mr. Polson: We have money and federal authorization and authorization from the Port of Oakland. We do not foresee a problem.

Mr. McNicholas: Will the 5-mile pipeline be installed in time to receive those funds?

Mr. Polson: Installation and operation of pipeline will be done by a contractor. As long as Federal and State appropriations remain the same, there shouldn't be a problem.

Mr. McNicholas: How long will this project take?

Mr. Polson: Dredge material would arrive in fall 2005.The pipeline can take 3-5 months to complete. The timing depends on how long the bidding process takes. However, if the federal government decides to construct the pipeline then there may be a problem with timing. Our goal is to have the site ready, permits in place, and to ensure funding. The three primary risks to funding are 1) Port of Oakland losing federal 2005 funding, 2) Hamilton losing funding (not very likely) and 3) Changes in law and policy that affect state funding.

Ms. Dekelboum: Will the pipe be a permanent installation?

Mr. Polson: No. But it could take 15-20 years to complete project.

Ms. Dekelboum: Since the water is shallow, will pipe/ barges be destructive to wildlife?

Mr. Polson: Barges will be out in deep water. Barging is the preferred method.

Ms. Dekelboum: Can we see the plans?

Mr. Polson: We will bring the plans next time and discuss alternatives at the next meeting.

Army BRAC Update: Ed Keller, BRAC Environmental Coordinator (BEC)

Documentation and Next Steps

Ed Keller announced that the regulatory documents and final documents are available at the public library, on line at http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/cespk-pm/haaf/docs.html or through the BRAC office.

Documentation

Levee Parcel- Transfer of 13.21 acres to the City of Novato for levee footprint scheduled for the spring of 2004. Notice FOST to transfer signed by Army. Notice that the document has been signed will be in local papers and the document made available at BRAC office, Novato library and on-line.

Archive Search Report (ASR):

- Firing in Butt
- Testing Range
- Skeet Range

Sampling conducted and data from the ASR sites recommended further investigation.

Northwest Alleged Disposal Area – The Army received concurrence from RWQCB on a recommendation for no further action/investigation.

Levee and POL Hill Parcel – The Army will transferred 20 acres to the City of Novato. POL Hill will be used for open space and the levee will be used for existing uses. Transfer is scheduled in the near future. The land use covenant for POL Hill is in process with regulators and has been discussed with the City of Novato.

Finalization of the Runway Stockpiles Report – This report contains an assessment of pile contaminants and the potential for reuse on site. RWQCB must concur on how the piles will be managed.

Addendum Building 41 – DDT levels are addressed through the ROD/RAP, which mandates how soils will be addressed and managed on site.

Field Work:

- DDT sampling and removal of soils at the south of the runway site and north corner of the drainage ditch. Final data report and workplan due out this summer.
- Building demolition for wetlands restoration is complete. Asbestos-containing material was identified in some of the buildings and was removed prior to demolition.

Regulatory Agency Comments

None were made.

Meeting Wrap-up and Adjournment: Ed Keller

Mr. Keller announced that the next meeting will be held on October 13, 2004.