



**SRS Citizens Advisory Board**

## **Facility Disposition and Site Remediation Committee**

**North Augusta Community Center, North Augusta, SC  
03/01/05**

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) Facilities Disposition and Site Remediation Committee (FD&SR) met on Tuesday, March 1, 5:00 PM, at the North Augusta Community Center, North Augusta, SC. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and receive updates on the SRS General Separations Area Consolidation Units and Restoration of Carolina Bay Depression Wetlands.

Attendance was as follows:

**CAB Members**

-Perry Holcomb  
-Leon Chavous  
-Sanielle Mackie  
-Tracey Carroll  
Joe Ortaldo  
Cassandra Norman Henry

**Regulators**

Jim Barksdale, EPA

**Stakeholders**

\* Rick McLeod  
Sam Booher  
Chris Barton, Univ. of Ky.

**DOE/Contractors**

T. F. England, WSRC  
De'Lisa Bratcher, DOE  
Paul Sauerborn, WSRC  
Teresa Haas, WSRC  
Dennis Ryan, DOE  
Ed McNamee, BSRI  
Tiajuana Cochnauer, USFS  
P. K. Hightower, WSRC  
Diana Hannah, DOE

\*CAB Technical Advisor

-FD&SR committee members

+Facilitator

^Press

Perry Holcomb, Chair, opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. In addition, he asked to go around the room for introductions by all. Mr. Holcomb stated that there will be a draft motion coming out in the next few days regarding Federal Facility Agreement (FFA) efficiencies, and that the motion will be presented at the Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) combined committee meeting in North Augusta, South Carolina on March 28th and 29th.

**FD&SR Committee meeting schedule review:** Paul Sauerborn presented the schedule, which listed focus areas that the FD&SR committee will be reviewing for 2005. Mr. Sauerborn stated that should anyone in the public have an item relevant to the ER committee scope to please notify him in order that he have those items reviewed and approved by the chairman of the

FD&SR committee for future presentations. Bill Lawless asked how the request should be delivered. Mr. Sauerborn stated that the request could be made verbally, in writing, or e-mail.

**General Separations Area Consolidation Unit (GSACU) Update:** Diana Hannah stated the purpose of the presentation is a progress update on the General Separations Area Consolidation Unit Closure. The scope of the remedial action is as follows:

- Closed the 22 Old Radioactive Waste Burial Ground (ORWBG) solvent tanks, which were grouted in place under an interim Record of Decision (ROD)<sup>4</sup>
- Removing and consolidating contaminated soils and material from H-Area Retention Basin (HRB), Warner's Pond (WP), and HP-52 and place them at pre-determined locations within the ORWBG
- Backfill and cover the excavated areas of HRB, WP and HP-5
- Upon completion of consolidation activities, an engineered cover system will be installed over the entire ORWBG, including its 22 old solvent tanks
- All units will be maintained under institutional controls, install intruder barrier system over persistent "hot spots"
- Closure of the GSACU is on-going with a goal to accelerate

Ed McNamee described the remediation of the 3 consolidation units as follows:

- Warner's Pond:
  - Remove 25,000 cubic yards of contaminated soils, pipes, and debris
  - Backfill and cover with geosynthetic cap
  - contaminant soil from the #2 Tilefield which is a contaminant migration threat
  - The primary contaminant is Cesium 137 (2.2 curies)
  - Includes a portion of the RCRA H-Area Inactive Sewer Line, which consists of 850 feet of 18 inch vitrified clay pipe
- H-Area Retention Basin
  - Operated from 1955 to 1972 to receive wastewater from the canyon facilities and H-Area Tank Farm
  - Install stream bypass and sheet pile for perched water
  - Set-up water conditioning unit to process contaminated water
  - Remove 15,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil
  - Primary contaminants are Cesium 137 and Strontium 90 (55 curies)
- HP-52 Pond
  - Site contaminated by radioactive effluent spills in 1967 and 1969
  - Primary contaminant is Cesium 137 (1.2 curies)
  - Estimated volume of soil to be removed is 5,000 cubic yards

Mr. McNamee stated that the entire effort would include:

- Removing the existing structures at the ORWBG
- Establish waste placement areas
- Consolidate materials from other areas
- Consolidate materials from other areas

Mr. McNamee showed the current schedule, which states the post construction report will be complete for the project in June of 2008, with a goal to accelerate that date significantly.

Rick McLeod asked where the soils would come from to complete the closure cap. Mr. McNamee stated that all the soils were to come from SRS. Jim Barksdale stated the groundwater associated with the ORWBG would be handled under a separate closure. Joe Ortaldo wanted to know the plan to keep the closure cap from settling and holding water. Mr. McNamee stated that the closure cap soils would be compacted in order to alleviate any slumping of the soil cap.

**Restoration of Carolina Bay Depression Wetlands:** Chris Barton stated the project objectives of the Restoration Project are:

- Establish best management practices for Carolina bays, or similar seasonal depression wetlands, and their adjacent environments
- Determine factors that control bay hydrology
- Assess how land management practices influence animal and plant species or communities
- Determine if planting tree and / or herbaceous species is a necessary management technique for the reestablishment of desired wetland species

Mr. Barton stated that the project looked at four treatment designs as follows:

- Herbaceous meadow
- Forested (cypress, tupelo)
- Pine savannah (burned and had a 100 meter buffer zone)
- Pine-hardwoods (no fire and had a 100 meter buffer zone)

The four treatment areas were cleared and in some instances reforested according to the prescribed planting schedule. The ditches (man made) that once carried water away from the bays were filled in according to the project guidelines allowing water to once again begin to accumulate in the bay depressions.

Mr. Barton identified the primary monitoring tasks were to evaluate the soils, hydrology, vegetation, herpetofauna, avifauna and invertebrates. In all of these cases, the response was a notable improvement in repopulating the bays. Mr. Barton noted that of all the bays in this project, only one was potentially non-restorable.

In conclusion, Mr. Barton made three significant comments about his project:

- The restoration treatments were successfully imposed. Planting of two wetland grass species and two wetland tree species was initially successful
- By 2002, all experimental (and reference) wetlands dried in response to a severe and prolonged regional drought, which may have increased the non-hydrophytic components of the vegetation. However, rain events in 2003 and subsequent flooding appear to have reversed this trend.

- Despite the initial drought, invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, birds and bats have responded positively to bay restoration activities and provides evidence supporting importance of isolated wetlands for biodiversity.
- Many ancillary benefits, i.e. bald eagles nesting in these areas

Bill Lawless asked what was meant by the term buffer relative to the bays. Mr. Barton stated the buffer is a distance of 100 meters from the tip of the perimeter of the bay. Mr. Lawless also was interested in the future of the bays should at some time in the future the site begins to give land back to the people of the surrounding communities. Mr. Barton stated that the bays are currently protected under the SRS Site-Use program. As a component of the SRS Wetland Mitigation Bank, the bays should be protected "in perpetuity" through recorded deeds if the land is transferred to the public. Sam Booher asked that after the restoration project completion, will the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) attempt to go after the other 92 bays on site. Mr. Barton did not know for sure what the path forward would be, however, he was hopeful that the USFS would pursue the bays preservation.

**Public Comments:** There being none, Perry Holcomb thanked all in attendance that participated in the meeting.

Mr. Holcomb adjourned the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

*Meeting handouts may be obtained by calling 1-800-249-8155.*