

**Fernald
Community
Reuse
Organization**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

PRELIMINARY DRAFT - NOT FOR CIRCULATION

REVIEW DATE: 1/6/98

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**FERNALD COMMUNITY REUSE ORGANIZATION
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN****I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

The Fernald Community Reuse Organization (CRO) is a non-profit corporation incorporated in the State of Ohio. It has been granted Federal income tax exemption by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service and designated a 501c(3) organization. The CRO was established in 1996 to provide planning recommendations to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), regarding steps needed to mitigate the community impact and employment losses that will result from the closure process at the Fernald Environmental Management Project (FEMP).

FEMP is managing site cleanup activities under an aggressive remedial action plan which will complete site cleanup 15 years earlier than originally projected, at a \$3 billion cost savings for taxpayers. The accelerated cleanup plan, approved in June 1996, was endorsed by the regulators, local elected officials, the Fernald Citizens Task Force and other stakeholders.

Although the pace of remediation at the FEMP will be determined largely by funding levels, the site is positioned to complete remediation as safely and quickly as possible to avoid additional burden to taxpayers.

The 1,050 acre FEMP site is located within Hamilton and Butler Counties in Ohio. Eight hundred and fifty acres of the site are located within Hamilton County and two hundred acres are located within Butler County.

The two counties are each governed by Boards of Commissioners. The three townships which surround the FEMP are Crosby, Morgan and Ross. The townships are governed by three-member Boards of Trustees.

The Fernald CRO primary service area is different from most other DOE CROs because the site is not in or near an incorporated community. Most of the surrounding communities are unincorporated and are characterized as rural, agricultural or "bedroom communities" for Greater Cincinnati area commuters.

In the last five years, the FEMP has undergone two work force reductions. In 1993, 255 workers were terminated during an involuntary reduction in force, and in 1995/1996, 431 workers left as part of a voluntary reduction in force. During the outyears of the Accelerated Cleanup Plan, additional work force reductions will occur. As projected in the May 1, 1996, *Environmental Restoration Acceleration Report*, a 37 percent work force reduction is expected over a 10-year period, through 2005.

The effects of the projected work force reductions at the Fernald Environmental Management Project (FEMP) and the resultant adverse economic impact on the regional economy combine to create a significant need for community transition planning and programs. Without deliberate, careful and collaborative planning, the closure of FEMP will create uncertainties that are an impediment to investment and growth in the Tri-township area and the surrounding Greater Cincinnati area.

The resources of land, material, worker skills and expertise present at the FEMP will not provide an optimal return to the region unless these resources are inventoried, their economic potential assessed and a variety of means designed for converting them to productive use that is compatible with the long term health and safety of the community. In order to achieve this goal, a Community Transition Plan and Implementation Program is a necessity.

II. Purpose of the Public Participation Plan

Development and eventual implementation of a Community Transition Plan is the fundamental purpose of the CRO. In order to carry out this task in an effective and equitable manner, it is vital that all affected individuals, organizations and institutions have meaningful opportunities to participate in the Community Transition Plan's development and implementation.

The purpose of this Public Participation Plan is to identify the CRO's goals for public participation and to identify the specific ways and means which will be utilized to ensure that these goals are achieved. Although the CRO finds that this Plan's identified goals and methods appear more than adequate to ensure public participation, the importance of public participation necessitates that the Plan be continuously under review as to its adequacy. The public is invited, at any and all times, to recommend additional methods to assist the CRO in obtaining information and opinions from all those that have a stake in its policy recommendations.

III. Public Participation Goals

A. The CRO will receive frequent, formal and informal policy advice from

stakeholders affected by its recommendations.

- B. The CRO will actively consider public comments and input prior to finalizing major policy recommendations or approving significant CRO actions.
- C. The CRO will utilize an active program of information dissemination that enables stakeholders to have meaningful opportunities to influence CRO decision making.

IV. Measures of Public Participation Goal Attainment

Goal A:

Minutes, correspondence and other documentary evidence will demonstrate that the CRO has effectively solicited frequent, public participation in its deliberations.

Goal B:

Minutes will reflect that consideration of public comments was a consistent element in CRO decision making.

Goal C:

Copies of newspaper announcements, newsletter articles, letters and other communications will document that the CRO acted assertively to keep stakeholders informed of its decision making processes.

V. Public Participation Methods and Activities

A. CRO Membership, Selection and Public Representation

A fundamental step in assuring public participation in CRO decision making has been the methods used to select and maintain a CRO Board of Trustees that is broadly representative of the stakeholder community. To ensure that the formation of the Fernald CRO was fair, open and inclusive of all interests, a convener from the University of Cincinnati was used to determine and recommend membership and develop the group's Charter and operating procedures. The convener's assignment included four phases - preliminary investigation, needs assessment, design of the CRO and implementation.

To inform both internal and external stakeholders of the CRO formation process, DOE and Fluor Daniel Fernald conducted a publicity campaign which involved news releases and display ads in the three local

newspapers; Fernald Envoy reports to local stakeholder groups; regular feature stories in the monthly stakeholder newsletter, "The Fernald Report," which is distributed to over 800 people; announcements to the Fernald workforce through Employee Updates, the Electronic News Network and other employee communications.

The Fernald CRO membership generally reflects the tri-township communities (Crosby, Morgan, Ross) surrounding the Fernald site. Of the 50-60 stakeholders who expressed interest in the Fernald CRO, 35 completed an application and 19 (including an ex-officio member) were appointed for either a two year or a three year membership, with opportunities for term renewal. Members include: Fernald salaried employees; union officials; community leaders; local residents; business leaders; local elected officials; educators and regional planners. The Chair is the superintendent of Ross Local School District.

A current listing of the Fernald CRO membership includes the following:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AFFILIATION</u>	<u>TERM</u>
Sharon Cornwell	Fluor Daniel Fernald employee	3 years
Lisa Crawford	FRESH President; Fernald Citizens Advisory Board member	2 years
Karl Dillhoff	Morgan Township resident	3 years
Louis Doll	Cincinnati Building & Const. Trades Council Rep.	2 years
Ralph Hennard	International Guards Union of Amer. Representative; Fluor Daniel Fernald employee	
William Hinkle	Hamilton County Communicaitons Operations director	3 years
Maurice Hornbach	Crosby Township Rep.; former Fernald employee	2 years
Darryl Huff	Fernald Citizens Advisory Board member	2 years
Dan Lawler	Crosby Elementary School principal	2 years
David McWilliams	Ross Local School District superintendent; CRO chair	3 years
William Neyer	exofficio member; DOE FEMP employee	
Thomas Renck	Ross Area Merchants Association representative	3 years
Alisa Rhodes	Fluor Daniel Fernald employee	2 years
Gary Storer	Crosby Township trustee	3 years
Robert Tabor	Fernald Atomic Trades & Labor Council representative; Fluor Daniel Fernald employee; Fernald Citizen's Advisory Board member	2 years
Donald Thiem	Ross Township trustee	3 years
Larry Thinner	West Shell realtors v.p. and office manager, West Chester Plaza	3 years
Randy Welker	Economic Development Coordinator, Hamilton County Development Company	3 years

B. Voice Mail System

The CRO has established an automated voice mail system which

members of the public can access 24-hours a day. Prior to recording the caller's message or inquiry, frequently updated announcements of CRO meetings and related information is provided to the caller by a recording. Reference is made to the availability of this system in all CRO correspondence and other communications.

C. Web Site

The CRO is allocated space on the website established and maintained by the FEMP. The website is utilized to post information on CRO activities and pending decisions. Efforts will be made to expand the inter-activity of the site, enhancing its ability to serve as a conduit for receiving public comments on CRO policy matters.

D. CRO Meetings and Public Participation

The CRO holds its regular meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. The meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. and every effort is made to conclude each meeting by no later than 8:30 p.m. This time frame has been found to be the best for attracting the attendance of stakeholders who have vocational and family obligations. Location of the meetings will most often be the Media Center of Ross High School. This site was selected for its centrality and accessibility to stakeholders.

During the conduct of CRO meetings, the Chair will frequently solicit comments from the audience and/or recognize members of the public who wish to address the CRO. In addition, at the close of each meeting, the Chair, once again, invites members of the public to address the CRO on any relevant matter.

Committee meetings of the CRO are held as needed. The dates for committee meetings are determined at the regular meetings and announced through the methods described elsewhere in this section of the Public Participation Plan. The Chair of each committee follows the pattern established by the CRO's Chair, frequently soliciting the input of those members of the public who attend committee meetings.

Documentation of public participation is maintained in the minutes of all general CRO meetings, as well as the proceedings of its committees.

E. Mailing Lists

The CRO has developed, maintained and utilized a mailing list that currently has over 150 entries. The list is derived from public sources,

as well as from individuals who have requested receipt of CRO announcements. Postcards are sent to all the individuals and groups on the list, announcing CRO meetings and presenting an overview of the agenda. Future plans include use of this list for the distribution of a four page newsletter. The mailing list is reviewed and updated three times each year.

F. News Releases

Major events in the development of the CRO's program are described in news releases that are distributed to all major media outlets in the region. On-going efforts are made to brief area reporters on the CRO's role and scope. This coverage helps inform the public about CRO activities and alerts them to the need for communicating their concerns to the CRO. Every effort is made to ensure that the CRO's address, telephone number, fax number, web site and meeting times are included in published articles or broadcasts.

G. Liaison with FEMP Personnel

The DOE's contractor, Fluor Daniel Fernald, is charged with implementing a broad based, multi-faceted public information program. Through this effort, many useful means for distributing information and soliciting public comment have been established. In order to help achieve its public participation goals, the CRO routinely briefs Fluor Daniel public affairs personnel on all phases of CRO deliberations and operations. This information is then distributed through the multiple channels established by the FEMP's ongoing public affairs efforts.

A particularly useful tool has been the Fernald Envoys. These Fluor Daniel personnel regularly communicate with dozens of constituencies that have an interest in Fernald affairs. The Envoys are regularly informed about the CRO and disseminate this information to their assigned groups. In turn, if the Envoys receive questions and comments about the CRO, these are communicated to the CRO for reply and follow up.

H. Attendance at Meetings of Related Organizations

The mission of the CRO largely focuses on matters of area development policy. Consequently, CRO members and/or the CRO's consultant regularly attend the meetings of several economic development agencies, local governments and environmental organizations. These meetings provide the CRO with information on area development plans and how

these plans may impact the options available to the CRO. Likewise, these meetings help the organizations to learn more about proposed CRO initiatives and offer advice or comments on feasibility and appropriateness.

A specific example would be the participation of the CRO's Economic Development Consultant in the meetings of Hamilton County's Overall Economic Development Plan Committee. This participation has resulted in Fernald's identification as a top priority in the County's development efforts.

I. Focus Groups With Stakeholders

An important method of data gathering, which is proposed for the CRO's Community Transition Plan process, is the conduct of several focus groups. These focus groups will be composed of representatives of various stakeholder organizations. Their purpose will be to assess various policy initiatives which will be under consideration for inclusion in CRO's implementation grant request to DOE.

For example, the concept of a revolving loan fund for projects that will engage dislocated workers would be reviewed by a focus group and assessed for its appropriateness and feasibility. These focus group comments would be utilized to refine, expand or eliminate this policy option.

It is anticipated that as many as eight focus groups will be conducted during the period May 1, 1998 to April 30, 1999.

J. Surveys of Area Residents

Stratified samples of area residents will be periodically surveyed to gauge opinion on alternative CRO plans. The surveys will be conducted either by telephone or mail. Responses will be analyzed and presented to the CRO on a semi-annual basis. Certain items will be included in each survey in order to monitor changes in opinion over time.

It is possible that these surveys will be done in conjunction with surveys regularly conducted by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati.

K. Distribution of Plan Document for Review and Reference

DOE and its contractor, Fluor Daniel Fernald, have established a Public

Environmental Information Center (PEIC). PEIC exists to serve as a repository for materials related to all aspects of FEMP. Members of the public can access and utilize the PEIC as a library and resource center. The CRO's Public Participation Plan and any Plan updates will be on file at the PEIC.

Copies of the plan will also be available at every meeting of the CRO and will be distributed to any member of the public that requests a copy. Copies will also be mailed upon request.

VI. Important Addresses and Telephone Numbers

- A. Fernald Community Reuse Organization
P.O. Box 38
Ross, OH 45061
513/648-4168
- B. Fernald Community Reuse Organization Voice Message Line
513/648-4168
- C. Economic Development Consultant
Fernald Community Reuse Organization:
Curt Paddock
5725 Dragon Way, Ste 219
Cincinnati, OH 45227
Phone: 513/527-3150
Fax: 513/527-3153
- D. Location of CRO Meetings:
Ross High School - Media Center
3425 Hamilton-Cleves Road
Ross, OH 45061
- E. FEMP and CRO Website Address:
WWW.fernald.gov
(Go to Stakeholders section, choose CRO)
- F. FEMP Public Environmental Information Center
PEIC
Delta Building
10995 Hamilton-Cleves Highway
Harrison, OH 45030
Phone: (513)648-7480/7481
Hours of Operation:
M: 7:30 a.m - 7:00 p.m.
T-Th: 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
F: 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.