



MEETING SUMMARY

Date: November 14, 2002

Topics:

- Report from the Post-Closure Public Access to Information Feasibility Study
- DOE Grand Junction Office as Long-Term Steward of Fernald
- Status of the Natural Resources Damages Settlement
- Fernald Comprehensive Stewardship Plan

Attendees:

Fernald Citizens Advisory Board

Jim Bierer
Marvin Clawson
Pam Dunn
Steve DePoe
Bob Tabor

FRESH

Carol Schroer
Edwa Yocum

The Perspectives Group

Doug Sarno
David Bidwell

U.S. Department of Energy

Ed Skintik
Gary Stegner
Anne Wickham
Art Kleinrath
Jay Jalovec

U.S. Department of Environmental Protection

Gene Jablonoski

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Donna Bohannon
Tom Schneider

Fluor Fernald

Joe Shomaker
Rick Strobl
Jeff Wagner
Sue Walpole
Eric Woods
Pete Yerace

Others

Mark Plessinger
Jim Innis

Feasibility Study Report

Doug Sarno opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda. Doug distributed copies of the completed report for the feasibility study on post-closure public access to site information. David Bidwell provided the group with an overview of the report, highlighting the following points:

- The report distinguishes three types of information management needs for DOE closure sites—management of official DOE records, preparation of information needed to carry out stewardship activities, and development of public information resources. The public has specific information needs that are unique to other information management needs.
- The public needs information to ensure continued protection of human health and the environment, as well as to maintain a community memory of the site's history. Specific information needs of the Fernald community are included in the report.
- The report recommends actions that should be taken by DOE at a site-specific and a national level. At the site level, DOE should provide information in easy-to-understand formats and develop a means to maintain a high degree of community awareness. At a national level, DOE must develop a clear path for the public to access in-depth information.

Doug explained that the FCAB will consider submitting the recommendations in the report as formal recommendations to Steve McCracken. He also noted that the report is available on the FCAB web site. David added that additional information regarding this topic and links to relevant web sites are available on the FCAB web site.

DOE Grand Junction Office and Long-Term Stewardship at Fernald

Doug explained that DOE Headquarters has determined that the DOE Grand Junction Office will act as the post-closure steward of Fernald. The Grand Junction Office is currently the functional arm of the Office of Long-Term Stewardship. Doug noted that the DOE plans to move the Office of Long-Term Stewardship from Environmental Management to Worker and Community Transition. Doug introduced Art Kleinrath, who works for DOE at Grand Junction, and Mark Plessinger, who is employed by the main contractor for the office.

Art distributed handouts and reviewed the role of the Grand Junction Office and its Long-Term Surveillance and Monitoring (LTSM) program. The LTSM program currently manages thirty-three sites around the country, many of which include disposal cells. Art stated that the Grand Junction Office was formed because of its central location for LTSM sites at the time, which mostly included mine tailing sites in the West. LTSM staff does not write stewardship plans for DOE sites, but they like to be involved early on so they know what to expect before a site is transferred to their management. Art explained that there are three basic phases in planning for long-term stewardship: 1) a site-specific stewardship plan is developed, 2) a transition plan is developed, and 3) the site is transferred to the Grand Junction Office. There are a number of options that the LTSM program uses to carry out its responsibility to implement site stewardship plans, including having an on-site DOE presence, occasional DOE site visits, hiring local contractors, or a combination of these approaches. Art noted that the management strategy is determined on a case-by-case basis.

Art also discussed the role of the Grand Junction Office in information management, which includes making information retrievable and useful for stewardship purposes. He stated that information management is one of the greatest challenges facing the LTSM program. The group briefly discussed information management technologies, and Art noted that Grand Junction has a searchable database of site records on its web site. Mark explained that the LTSM program is primarily concerned with managing a set of records focused on how the remedy was implanted at the site and how the disposal cell was constructed. A full set of site records is not needed. Mark cited a couple of examples where design documents were needed to address problems that arose at disposal cells. He noted that an on-site education center would probably be able to store the records needed for long-term stewardship. Art noted that the Grand Junction Office has been scanning the Weldon

Spring administrative record, so it will be available in an electronic format. He explained that the Grand Junction Office is learning as it goes, particularly as it assumes responsibility for larger sites. Fernald will be the largest site managed by the office when it is transferred. Art encouraged the group to include provisions for how the public will access information in the site's long-term stewardship plan.

The group discussed how long-term stewardship activities are funded, particularly during a site's transition to stewardship. Mark explained that the Grand Junction Office projects its annual funding request based on the sites that are in the LTSM program. Anne Wickham explained that Fernald will not enter the LTSM budget until FY2004 and that the funding Grand Junction receives for Fernald will be narrow in scope at that time. She stated that she is currently working on projections for what post-closure funding requirements will be and should have some estimates by the end of November. Mark noted that the DOE Site Transition Framework will benefit this planning process, because sites must identify budget and workforce requirements for the transition to stewardship.

Art explained that the Grand Junction Office role at Fernald will evolve over time, from an advisory role to managing stewardship. It is likely that Grand Junction will assume some responsibilities at Fernald while cleanup projects are still being completed. Art noted that it is important to budget for these transition activities, even if cost estimates are not precise. Doug noted that there will be three components to long-term stewardship at Fernald: 1) management of the remedy and maintaining controls, 2) maintaining the integrity of the ecological restoration, and 3) providing information to public. The Grand Junction Office will definitely be responsible for the first component, but it is not clear who will be responsible for the other two.

Pam Dunn asked Doug Sarno to assemble a packet of information about the FCAB and its recommendations for the Grand Junction Office.

Natural Resource Damages Settlement

Doug noted that the FCAB is interested in the potential Natural Resource Damages (NRD) settlement between DOE and the State of Ohio, because it could result in funds that could be used towards community education during long-term stewardship. At the FCAB meeting in October, the group discussed the possibility of submitting a letter that supports settlement. Doug asked how the Board could help move the parties towards some resolution, to provide clarity for stewardship planning.

Committee members stated that they would like to receive more information from DOE and the State regarding their positions on the issue. Tom Schneider and Pete explained that the primary obstacle to settlement is a disagreement regarding the long-term obligation that DOE has to maintain the ecological restoration of the site. Pete Yerace stated that, as a Natural Resources Trustee, he believes a statement from the FCAB regarding restoration of the site and future obligations for maintaining restoration projects could be helpful in resolving differences between the parties.

The group discussed the importance of ensuring that any monetary settlements are used for specific purposes at the site. Tom stated that state funds can be earmarked for specific uses.

Comprehensive Stewardship Plan

A copy of the draft Comprehensive Stewardship Plan was distributed to each Committee member. This document will be discussed in depth at a special Monday, December 9, Stewardship Committee meeting. The meeting will be held at 6:30 in T-1 at the site.

Eric explained that the structure of the plan has not changed from earlier drafts and still addresses the OSDF and the restored areas. The plan conforms to guidance provided by DOE Headquarters. He also explained that a preliminary cost estimate is still being reviewed but will be added to the plan. Gary Stegner noted that this is a basic document, which will become more detailed over time. Rather than having a formal comment period, at this time DOE is encouraging a public discussion about the plan.

Stewardship Toolbox

Doug proposed developing a binder, similar to the Closure Toolbox developed for the FCAB, which would include important documents and updates regarding long-term stewardship issues. He provided the group with a draft outline of its contents and asked them to provide input.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.