



MEETING SUMMARY

Date: May 10, 2004

Topics:

- Review the status of long-term stewardship activities at Fernald
- Gauge interest in post-closure activities at the Fernald site
- Identify potential members of a coalition for post-closure Fernald

Attendees:

Fernald Citizens Advisory Board

Jim Bierer
Lisa Crawford
Steve Depoe
Pam Dunn
Bob Tabor

FRESH

Edwa Yocum

The Perspectives Group

David Bidwell
Doug Sarno

U.S. Department of Energy

Jack Craig, Office of Legacy Management
Jane Powell, Office of Legacy Management
Gary Stegner, Fernald
Anne Wickham, Ohio Field Office

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Donna Bohannon
Graham Mitchell
Tom Schneider

Fluor Fernald

Ken Alkema
Ric Strobl
Jeff Wagner
Sue Walpole
Eric Woods

Additional Attendees

Barbara Crandel, Native American Indian Alliance of Ohio
Jill Evans, Morgan Township Historical Society
Connie Foster, Native American Indian Alliance of Ohio
Hellen Griffin, Native American Indian Alliance of Ohio
Jim Innis, Crosby Township Historical Society
Nancy Poe, Morgan Township Trustee
Warren Strunk, Crosby Township Trustee

General Announcements and Updates

David Bidwell welcomed the attendees to this Stewardship Summit, a special meeting of the Stewardship Committee. He asked if there were any general announcements regarding Stewardship issues.

Anne Wickham provided a brief update on the management of pre-1992 records by DOE. She reported that a team of five people is working at the Crescentville records center on a daily basis and has validated the contents of more than half (9,194) of the boxes of pre-1992 records. DOE is still searching for a contractor to destroy eligible records. Anne stated that DOE would wait until more records have been validated to begin sending lists of records eligible for destruction to stakeholders. Jeff Wagner announced that Fluor expects to give its first 30-day notice for the destruction of records in early June. Anne announced that she and Luther Brown of Fluor toured the photo collection in Sharonville. Soon, DOE will box up pre-1992 photos and move them upstairs in the Sharonville office.

Steve Depoe announced that Fernald Living History, Inc. would provide a booth for the Crosby Township Annual Picnic on May 16, 2004. The organization will show photos of the site and ask area residents what information they would like to have available regarding Fernald.

Lisa Crawford announced that a FRESH meeting would be held on May 27 at 7:30, to discuss Silos Projects safety issues.

David reported that the FCAB approved the three letters that were suggested by the Stewardship Committee at its April meeting. Gary Stegner announced that responses to these letters would be available at the May 11 FCAB meeting.

Overview of Stewardship Status and Issues

David Bidwell explained that this stewardship summit is part of a larger effort, known as the Future of Fernald process. The current goal of the Stewardship Committee is to build a coalition of individuals and groups to be involved in the future of the Fernald site. He reviewed current stewardship issues at the Fernald site and the purpose of the stewardship summit. The purpose of the summit was to review the status of long-term stewardship at Fernald, gauge interest in the stakeholder vision for the Future of Fernald, and determine who might be interested in being part of a coalition for post-closure Fernald.

David noted that the role of the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board is diminishing. Because the FCAB is chartered to provide advice on the environmental cleanup of the site, funding for the Board is not expected past site closure. David explained that closure of the site, which is scheduled for 2006, means that all of the cleanup goals have been met for soils and groundwater treatment systems are in place. Funding for the FCAB has already decreased, so the community needs to determine how it will be involved in the future management of the site.

David showed the group an image of what the site would look like after closure, including ecological restoration projects, wetland areas, and the on-site disposal facility. He explained that more than 900 acres of the site would become an undeveloped park. David noted that representatives from the new DOE Office of Legacy Management were in attendance; Legacy Management will be responsible for long-term surveillance and monitoring of the on-site disposal facility and other residual contamination at the site. David explained that DOE wants to sign contracts with other organizations to manage post-closure groundwater remediation, land management, and records management. DOE has also agreed to provide land for the reinterment of Native American remains. David explained that funding for post-closure activities would come through the annual federal appropriations process. He stated that funding for some stewardship activities might come from settlement of the Natural Resource Damages suit brought against DOE by the State of Ohio.

David reviewed key points from the Stakeholder Vision for the Future of Fernald, which was adopted in 1999. At that time, the community envisioned a safe, accessible site, which was primarily focused on education. He also reviewed the 2002 FCAB report, *Telling the Story of Fernald*. That report stressed the role of the

community in management of the site and the need for continued awareness of the site among community members. David also explained that the community has proposed the construction of an education facility at the site in order to achieve the vision.

David reported that the Stewardship Committee is still addressing many big questions about the future of the site and how the community would be involved in its management. For the stewardship summit, David introduced these major questions:

- Does the Stakeholder Vision for the Future of Fernald inspire the attendees?
- What is the appropriate scope for post-closure activities at the site?
- What resources are available for building a coalition?
- What organizations or individuals should be contacted about the coalition?

Discussion of Post-Closure Fernald and the Community Role

The attendees discussed the status of stewardship planning for the Fernald site and other issues related to post-closure management of the site. Key discussion points included:

- Local Native American groups continue to be interested in the reburial of ancestors' remains at the Fernald site. DOE has committed to provide land for the reinterment of Native American remains. Any group can rebury remains at the site, if remains have been officially repatriated to them. Eric Woods agreed to provide attendees with copies of a 2003 letter that clarifies DOE's commitment. To date, no federally recognized Tribe has expressed an interest in reburying remains at the site. Due to Joe Schomaker's departure from site, Ed Skintik is the primary contact regarding these issues.
- Community awareness is an essential part of long-term stewardship, because community awareness will maintain confidence and acceptance in the site remedy among new residents and future generations. Information management and outreach are not optional "amenities."
- While the community is still interested in having an education facility at the site, the contents and use of a building are more important than the type of structure. An education facility should present easy-to-understand information to the public. However, it is important to have a facility that will draw visitors to the site.
- The current complex of DOE trailers at the site is an acceptable starting point for developing a community facility; however, the trailers might not be a significant draw of people to the site. The presence of the trailer should allow the community to garner more support for post-closure activities and funding for a permanent facility at the site. It is important to develop a vision for how the trailers could be improved into a more attractive facility.
- Outreach to the community and education programs for local students are both important parts of maintaining awareness of the site. It is important that the site be used to communicate lessons learned, so that future generations do not make the same environmental mistakes that were made at Fernald.
- The site must develop an institutional control plan, which is legally binding under CERCLA. This plan must include an information management component. Local DOE representatives have indicated that they will base much of this plan on the ideas presented in *Telling the Story of Fernald*.
- The photographic collection is an important community resource, because photographs are a great way to communicate history. The group discussed the need to store the photos in an appropriate environment. DOE plans to have volunteers caption some photographs, so they can be kept as official records; the remainder could be donated to a community group, through a formal agreement.
- Communication with Congressional representatives and other elected officials will be a key to getting funding for major construction or programs at Fernald. It is important that the community approach elected officials with a unified voice. The message for elected officials should focus on the importance of public outreach and awareness in maintaining protectiveness of the remedy. Ohio will be important to the 2004 elections, so it may be a good time to request funding for special projects in the state.

The attendees agreed that the Stakeholder Vision of the Future of Fernald, which envisions the site as an educational resource, is the correct vision for the future of the site.

Plans for a Coalition

Doug Sarno asked if there was energy for developing a coalition that would move forward to achieve the community vision. He reiterated the declining role of the FCAB and stated the importance of having a new entity to take a lead on post-closure involvement in the site. He also recognized that the FCAB is limited in its ability to reach out to elected officials.

Representatives of all the organizations attending the meeting expressed interest in being part of a coalition, if their organizations would support it. Those representatives provided their names to David Bidwell and agreed to check with their respective organizations regarding involvement in the coalition.

The group reaffirmed its interest in having Native American groups involved in the coalition, regardless of whether the group is a federally recognized Tribe.

The attendees identified the need for a strategic plan that would help the community achieve the goals laid out in the Stakeholder Vision. Stewardship Committee members noted that changes in DOE's approach to stewardship has required the community to take a different approach to achieving its goals. They observed that site closure is approaching rapidly and stressed the need for the coalition to make tangible progress.

The attendees discussed the need to form or work with an existing nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization that could seek funding and Congressional support. Members questioned the advantages of creating a new organization or using an existing organization, such as Fernald Living History, Inc. which is about to receive its 501(c)3 status. Steve Depoe suggested that the coalition should contact the Atomic Heritage Foundation, which is currently focused on preservation of the Manhattan Project sites. He stated that organizations like the Atomic Heritage Foundation provide grants to other organizations.

Next Steps

The group agreed that future Stewardship Committee meetings would be devoted to building a coalition. Attendees were encouraged to provide other stakeholders with the brochure, *The Future of Fernald Begins Today*, to generate broader involvement in the coalition.

Lisa Crawford will contact Representative Steve Chabot's office to schedule a meeting for July. At its June meeting, the coalition members will develop talking points for meeting with Congressional representatives. At this meeting, the group will also discuss the process of achieving 501(c)3 status and the potential of using Fernald Living History, Inc. as a unifying organization.

The group asked DOE to provide a written response to the FCAB's request for information on the use of trailers as a community information facility. Key information includes square footage and a vision of how the trailers could be improved.

By the end of May, David Bidwell will provide the group with a "straw man" strategic plan for the coalition. Coalition members were encouraged to send ideas to David over the next two weeks.

Next Meeting

The next Stewardship Committee meeting, devoted to making progress on building a coalition, will be held on Wednesday, June 30.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.