

WEST CHICAGO INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM
July 25, 2008
Minutes

ATTENDEES

Barbara Magel, Counsel for Local Communities
John Wills, CBBEWL, Local Communities
John Coakley, City of Warrenville
Tom Williams, IEPA
Chuck Grigalauski, IEPA
Kelly Grahn, IEMA/DNS
Steve Shafer, IEMA/DNS contractor
Gerald Karr, Illinois Attorney General's Office
Mary Constantino, DuPage County State's Attorney's Office
Jim Kleinwachter, The Conservation Foundation
Andrea Cline, The Conservation Foundation
Kim Smart, DuPage River Coalition & property owner
Sandra Riess, property owner
Paula McShane, property owner
Don Feld, TAG
Mark Krippel, Tronox
Tim Fischer, U.S. EPA, Superfund
Rebecca Frey, U.S. EPA, Superfund
David Seely, U.S. EPA, Superfund
Colleen Moynihan, U.S. EPA
Margaret Gielniewski, U.S. EPA
Nefertiti Simmons, U.S. EPA

INTRODUCTIONS / COMMENTS

As there were a few new attendees, everyone introduced themselves. (Becky also introduced three newly-hired EPA project managers who she brought along for the meeting and the Kress Creek Site tour after the meeting.)

Becky announced that she recently applied for and got a promotion to a supervisory position in Superfund, so she will no longer be a Remedial Project Manager and will no longer be working on the Kerr-McGee sites. Tim Fischer will continue to manage the three Kerr-McGee sites that he currently has (Reed-Keppler Park, Sewage Treatment Plant, and Kress Creek/West Branch DuPage River), and David Seely will take over the Residential Areas site. Dave worked for many years on the Reed-Keppler Park and Sewage Treatment Plant sites, so is very familiar with the West Chicago sites. Dave said he will try to get up-to-speed as fast as possible on the Residential Areas site work. Dave can be reached at (312) 886-7058 or seely.david@epa.gov.

REED-KEPPLER PARK SITE

Tim said that EPA issued a Certification of Completion letter to Tronox under the federal consent decree for the work at the Reed-Keppler Park (RKP) site, so the remedial work at that site is officially complete. Tim said he will begin working with EPA's delisting folks to put together a package to propose delisting the site from the National Priorities List (NPL).

SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT SITE, river portion

Reach SA (STP to Mack Road): Tim reported that the maintenance and monitoring period for Reach SA of the river began in August 2006, and the only remaining action for Reach SA was to approve the Final Completion Report for that reach. Tim reported that EPA approved the Final Completion Report on May 29, 2008, and will be placing that document in the information repositories (West Chicago and Warrenville Public Libraries).

Reach SB (Mack Road to Kress Creek confluence): Tim reported that all the plantings in Reach SB were completed this past spring, and the post-construction walkover inspection was conducted on June 12, 2008, to verify that the area had been successfully restored. The punchlist items that were identified during the inspection were completed, and Tronox submitted the post-construction inspection report on June 25th. Reach 5B is now in the maintenance and monitoring period, and Tronox should be submitting the draft Final Completion Report for Reach 5B in the near future.

KRESS CREEK/WEST BRANCH DUPAGE RIVER SITE

Cleanup Progress

Tim provided an update on cleanup activities for the creek and river.

Reaches 1 and 2 (storm sewer outfall to Joy Road): Post-construction walkover inspections were completed in September 2007 and the maintenance and monitoring period began in October 2007. Since then, EPA received the Final Completion Report for Reaches 1 and 2, and provided comments to Tronox in July 2008. Tronox is preparing the revised report.

Reaches 3A, 3B and 4 (Joy Road to the confluence): The post-construction walkover inspection was conducted in October/November 2007, and those reaches are now in the maintenance and monitoring period. Since then, EPA received the Final Completion Report for those reaches, and provided comments to Tronox in July 2008. Tronox is preparing the revised report for Reaches 3A, 3B and 4.

Reaches SC and 5D (confluence to River Oaks): Planting work is nearing completion with less than 100 plants remaining to be installed. The post-construction walkover inspection will be conducted when the planting work is completed (likely in August

2008). Some repair work along the bank in Reach 5C needs to be completed from damage incurred last winter, and that work will be conducted this summer.

Reach 5E (River Oaks to Williams Road): When the 2008 construction season began at the end of April, there were 5 pods of contamination remaining to be completed (Pods 11, 12, 13, 26 and 27). Pods 11, 12 & 13 all were on the east bank of the river across from Emerald Green, and those were completed on May 19th. Pods 26 & 27 were located west of the Williams Road bridge on the north bank, and those were completed on May 23rd. Restoration work on Pods 26 & 27 was slightly delayed in order to coordinate the work with nearby pods located in Reach 6 of the river. That work was finished up a few weeks ago. A Y2-acre mitigation wetland was constructed in the former location of Pods 3 and 4, across the river and a bit upriver from Emerald Green.

Reach 6 (Williams Road to Butterfield Road): The first several pods upriver from the Cenacle property have been completed. Currently work is ongoing in Pod 7 across the river from the Cenacle property. After Pod 7, work will move to Pods 5 and 6, located at the bend in the river on the Cenacle property, just upriver from Pod 7.

Design Activities

Tim reported that Tronox is preparing a draft design for Reach 7 of the river (Butterfield Road to Warrenville Dam), and that design should be submitted to EPA and the Local Communities soon. Work in Reach 7 is scheduled to start in spring 2009 and be completed that same season. Also, EPA recently approved the Reach 8 Characterization Report. Tim said there are no outstanding access issues for the site. All site cleanup work currently is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2010.

Site Tour

Tim said that people participating in the site tour after the forum meeting should convene in the parking lot outside city hall immediately following the meeting.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS SITE

Recap of "old cleanup residual" issue: Kerr-McGee conducted a cleanup of 100+ residential properties in West Chicago in the mid-1980s. The issue is whether there is potentially any low-level residual contamination that was left behind at the bottom of the old excavation in the mid-1980s that was then covered with clean backfill soil. If such residual low-level contamination exists, it would probably be just slightly above EPA's current cleanup standard, and the clean soil that was placed over it may have prevented EPA from detecting it during the Superfund investigation and cleanup that started in the mid-1990s. This issue was raised and EPA is now working to resolve it. This issue affects only those particular properties that were part of the mid-1980s cleanup. Properties that were not part of the 1980s cleanup are not affected by this issue.

Becky reported that EPA has been conducting a lot of fieldwork since the last forum meeting related to this issue, as discussed below:

Access

Currently EPA has identified 32 properties that were involved in the 1980s cleanup that need additional testing. (Becky said that 28 of these are privately-owned residential properties, 3 are Tronox-owned, and 1 is a City-owned street. EPA decided to focus first on privately-owned properties, but also started with some Tronox-and City-owned properties as "practice" properties for the field investigations.) So far, EPA has obtained access to 23 of the 32 properties. EPA needs to make additional access attempts at the remaining 9 properties currently identified for testing. EPA also needs to continue the confirmation-file-review work of the remaining 1980s properties, which might result in additional properties from the 1980s cleanup being identified for testing.

Fieldwork Progress & Findings

Becky reported that the EPA fieldwork has been progressing very well. The equipment issues that Becky discussed at the last forum meeting have not recurred. (Measures have been taken to prevent moisture from getting inside the probes that are lowered down the boreholes, and there have been relatively few problems with the Geoprobe unit that drills the holes on properties.) The only real delays have been weather-related (rain delays).

Phase 1:

Becky had reported at the last forum meeting that all of the surface gamma walkover surveys had been completed at all 23 properties with access, that some "elevated" readings were identified that needed to be further investigated, and that EPA was including such areas within the areas being investigated in the 2nd phase (down-hole gamma logging). The minutes from the May 2008 forum meeting included a discussion of other potential reasons (besides thorium contamination) for such "elevated" readings (i.e., fertilizers, building materials, etc.). Becky re-emphasized that the surface gamma readings are being used only as a screening measurement to help locate areas that need to be further investigated, and that under the Superfund cleanup work, only materials exceeding the cleanup standard had to be excavated and removed. As a result, it is expected that some "borderline" materials will be found that were not excavated under the Superfund cleanup. Soil sample results, not gamma readings, will be the deciding factor of whether materials are above or below the cleanup standard.

Phase 2:

As of the last forum meeting, EPA had just gotten started with the downhole work at a few of the properties. Becky explained that EPA has completed a lot of work since the last meeting

Of the 23 properties with access, EPA has completed the downhole gamma logging work at 20 of them. (One more Tronox-owned lot is partly done, but Becky does not have that data yet.) At the 20 properties, EPA installed a total of 1,032 boreholes. Each borehole had downhole gamma readings taken at multiple 6" depth intervals down the inside of the PVC pipe. The downhole readings are taken to a typical depth of 5' for 1980s excavation areas and 3' for other areas (not part of the 1980s cleanup) with "elevated" surface gamma readings. Of the 1,032 borehole locations, only 11 boreholes had any gamma readings that exceeded the calibration "trigger" number (approximately 1% of all boreholes) and triggered soil sampling at depth. The 11 boreholes were from 8 different properties. For each borehole location where a downhole gamma reading exceeded the calibration trigger, EPA collected at least 1 soil sample from that location (sometimes more) from the appropriate depth(s) based on the downhole data. Based on the soil sample results from those 11 locations, only 5 had soil sample results above 7.2 pCi/g (approximately 0.5% of all boreholes). The 5 boreholes with sample results above 7.2 pCi/g are from 4 different properties (2 of which are Tronox-owned, unoccupied houses). In summary, EPA is not finding very much subsurface contamination so far.

Phase 3

In areas that had "elevated" surface gamma readings but where none of the downhole gamma readings triggered soil sampling, EPA is going back to find out what caused the surface gamma readings. Also, some of the areas might not have been able to be downhole gamma logged if the area was inaccessible to the geoprobe unit. To answer the question of what caused the "elevated" surface gamma readings, EPA is taking 0-6" surface soil samples from such areas. Depending on the number and distribution across the property of the "elevated" gamma readings, EPA is collecting anywhere from 1 to 10 surface soil samples from each property in question, and is erring on the side of being conservative (i.e., more samples) to make sure we don't have to come back later to collect additional samples.

Early on during the field effort EPA had collected 2 surface soil samples, but recently EPA collected the rest of the surface soil samples. To date, EPA has collected 103 surface soil samples from 15 properties. Those results are just starting to come in and Becky has not had time to review and evaluate them, so she can't yet report on those results. The 2 samples that had been collected earlier both exceeded 7.2 pCi/g (1 from a Tronox-owned property and 1 from a privately-owned property), and were from what appears to be very small impacted areas.

Standardized Results

Becky said she has worked with her in-house field team to develop a standard format (figures and tables) for displaying and presenting the results of the field effort. The field team members are now working on preparing the figures and tables for each of the properties tested so far, so that EPA will be able to provide all the information to each respective property owner.

Basements

Becky reported on the results of the file review for the nearly 2,200 properties in EPA's study area to see which properties had basement testing and which did not. (Note: some properties do not have basements -vacant lots, streets, alleys, etc.) Becky said she tallied the results for the entire site study area overall, and for the neighborhood immediately surrounding the Rare Earths Facility (REF). Specifically, Becky looked at the area immediately east of the REF (from the eastern edge of the REF to Joliet Street), immediately west of the REF (from the railroad tracks to Sherman Street), and immediately north of the REF (homes on the north side of Ann Street from Sherman to Joliet).

For the area immediately around the REF, there were 211 properties with basements/crawlspaces, and EPA conducted indoor testing at 168 of those properties (approximately 80% of basements were tested).

For the entire site study area, which includes neighborhoods very distant from the REF, there were 1933 properties with basements/crawlspaces, and EPA conducted indoor testing at 737 of those properties (approximately 38% of basements were tested).

Becky said that she thought that testing 80% of the basements in the neighborhood immediately surrounding the REF was a substantial number, and except for one property in that neighborhood that had contamination in the basement, similar situations to that one were not found. Becky suggested that one option for the remaining 20% of the properties in that neighborhood would be for EPA to let the property owners know that their basements were never tested, and offer indoor testing for those properties.

Becky also noted that she has had discussions with some property owners where it appears that there was some 1980s cleanup work in the basement, to let them know EPA would like to test the basements. EPA and IEMA/DNS and the owners now need to schedule a time for the indoor surveys.

Communications

Becky said that Janet Pope, EPA's Community Involvement Coordinator, was not able to attend the forum meeting but sent along an update. As part of updating the Community Involvement Plan, EPA conducted community interviews over the course of 2 days at the end of June 2008. EPA ran an ad in the Daily Herald and a Spanish-language newspaper, and dual-language postcards were sent out to people on the mailing list, notifying the public about the interviews and how to schedule an interview time. Approximately 25 interviews were conducted. The Community Involvement Plan should be available later this fall, and copies will be put in both Information Repositories (Warrenville and West Chicago Public Libraries) when finalized. It will also be posted on EPA's webpage.

Electronic versions of past forum minutes dating back to May 2007 also have been posted on EPA's webpage.

The other thing EPA wants to put on the website is a list of contacts to let people know who to contact if they want their yard tested, who to contact for basement testing, how to access the City's technical consultant, etc. Janet needs to get the appropriate information in order to be able to put this information on EPA's webpage. EPA should also post information about the change in EPA's project manager for residential issues.

Other Residential Issues

Paula Neltner asked about whether the residential properties would have a maintenance and monitoring period similar to what Tim discussed for the creek and river cleanup. Tim explained that the maintenance and monitoring period for the creek and river is to ensure that the restored areas (plants, riverbanks, etc.) stay the way they are supposed to stay, not to recheck for contamination.

Paula asked what the air monitoring "boxes" are for that are located around the vicinity of the REF. Kelly Grahn explained that those are part of the ongoing monitoring program for the REF under the IEMA/DNS license for that facility. The white monitoring stations belong to Tronox, and they are required to monitor emissions to meet certain dose criteria on a monthly and annual basis. The blue monitoring stations belong to the State, and IEMA/DNS uses those to conduct independent checks of Tronox's data. Kelly said that the Tronox monitoring data is published twice a year and sent to the State, and the State sends the documents to the West Chicago Public Library for placement in the designated room there. The documents Kelly referred to are the Semi-Annual Environmental Monitoring Reports. Kelly said that the State periodically audits the information in the library to make sure that all the material listed on their "master list" is there.

In response to a question about the use of radioactive terms and measurement units, Kelly Grahn suggested that the Health Physics Society website contains some good, basic information about radiation and radiation terms. The website is www.hps.org. Kelly said the website has an "Ask the Experts" section as well as "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)" and should be a good source of information. There is also some good information on the IEMA website at www.state.il.us/iema.

Paula asked Mark Krippel why they rent the properties they own instead of selling them. Mark said that they typically rent the properties to various personnel who are working on the project, such as health physics technicians and contractors working on the sites. Mark said that they probably will eventually sell the properties.

OTHER ISSUES

Update on NOAA Grant Projects

John Wills said that the Forest Preserve has agreed that the best site for the new Fish Research Center is on the former Cenacle property, so that project is proceeding through

the design & development stage. The Deep Pool/Glacial Pool is continuing to be developed in terms of the habitat it provides and the plantings around it. The pool will be stocked with some sensitive fish species in conjunction with the Illinois DNR. Also, there was a public information session about the dam removals, and the Warrenville Grove Dam is one of the projects that will be funded by the NOAA grant. The public information meeting was well-attended. The collected public comments have been used as part of the permit application for a second dam that is very similar -the MacDowell Grove Dam further downstream. That project is out for bid and should be starting around late August, with a very quick time period for construction. The MacDowell Grove dam removal is not being funded by the NOAA grant, but is being funded by a different grant. A sheetpile dam that mimics the existing dam will be left behind until all thorium cleanup work in the river is complete.

NEXT FORUM MEETING

The next meeting of the West Chicago Intergovernmental Forum is scheduled for **Friday, October 10, 2008**, at 10 a.m. in West Chicago City Council Chambers, West Chicago.

West Chicago Intergovernmental Forum Agenda

West Chicago City Council Chambers
July 25, 2008
10:00 am

INTRODUCTIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

SITE STATUS UPDATES

- **RKP Site**
- **STP Site (river portion)**
- **Kress Creek Site**
- **Residential Areas Site**

OTHER AGENDA ITEMS / ISSUES

- **Update on NOAA Grant Projects**

SET NEXT MEETING DATE

ADJOURN