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**VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE  
INSTALLATION RESTORATION PROGRAM  
COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD  
VANDENBERG CENTER, BUILDING 11008  
21 SEPTEMBER 2001**

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Ms. Beatrice Kephart, Chief, Environmental Restoration, called the Vandenberg Air Force Base (AFB) Community Advisory Board (CAB) meeting to order at 1000 hours. Two new guests were introduced to the CAB, Ms. Sharon Connolly and Mr. Jim MacKenzie. Also introduced was Col Campbell, the new 30<sup>th</sup> Medical Group Commander. Ms. Kephart presented the meeting agenda: Installation Restoration Program (IRP) Overview, TRV Ecological Risk Update, AOC 59, Phytostabilization, CAB Enhancement, and Member Comments.

Ms. Kephart provided the CAB with an update of the IRP activities. Currently, the base is revising their Federal Facility Site Remediation Agreement (FFSRA) as Vandenberg estimates it will receive additional funding during fiscal years (FY) 04 through FY07. The base is posturing itself to spend \$8.3M received for FY02. Interim removal actions have been implemented already at Sites 31, 24, 35, 8, 9, and 10.

Next, Ms. Kephart introduced Mr. Mike McElligott, 30 CES/CEVR, who presented a briefing on the ecological risk assessment (ERA) dispute. Currently the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is requiring the use of draft Navy-BTAG Toxicity Reference Values (TRVs) for use in the predictive and validation phases of ERA. Vandenberg AFB disagrees with the use of these values in those stages of risk assessment and has formally opened a dispute with the DTSC. Vandenberg AFB's position is that the proposed use of TRV-low values for predictive and validation phases of ERAs are not appropriate, technically defensible, or procedurally appropriate. According to Dr. Callahan (Chair of the BTAG committee), on 17 October 2000 the intended use of Draft Navy-BTAG TRVs was to, "screen the extremes of potential risk, identifying sites posing little or no risk and those posing significant immediate risk."

The predictive assessment section of the DTSC Guidance for ERA states that "assessment endpoints are critical to the function of the biological community or population and are the focus of the ecological risk assessment." Reproductive impairment and development abnormality responses are directly related to Vandenberg AFB assessment endpoints. Using BTAG TRVs in the ERA process makes the ERAs overly conservative. The U.S. Army conducted an independent study regarding the relevance to assessment endpoints and reached the conclusion that "over half of the draft Navy-BTAG TRVs were based on studies in which the toxicity endpoint was of lower ecological significance than that reported in alternate studies in the literature."

Mr. McElligott also stated that Vandenberg AFB uses values for 80 chemicals of concern (COCs) which is more than twice the number of COCs used in the BTAG TRV-low values. To date, only one military base is using the BTAG TRV numbers. Other installations are awaiting the outcome of the dispute resolution. The document containing the numbers and values in question has had no scientific peer review. No independent technical review of the draft memorandum was performed or is planned.

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On 25 April 2001, the Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) met with all involved parties. No consensus was met. Consequently, Vandenberg elevated the dispute to the next level and will present the matter to the Senior Executive Committee (SEC). A mediator will be present to facilitate the process and hopefully aid in reaching an agreement.

The next speaker to brief the CAB was Ms. Amena Atta, 30 CES/CEVR, regarding phytostabilization technology at area of concern (AOC) 59 (across from the NASA building). This cleanup technology is unlike the traditional “pump and treat” method, and is a more “green” approach to cleanup using plants to remove groundwater contaminants. Phytostabilization is a process where plants are used to remove contaminated groundwater through uptake and consumption in order to contain or control the migration of contaminants.

AOC 59 has been characterized as containing high levels of perchloroethene (PCE), and trichloroethene (TCE) in shallow groundwater, as evidenced in sampling results from groundwater monitoring wells installed around the site. Approximately 1,200 poplar trees are planted near the “hot zones” to remove contaminated groundwater through the trees fast growing roots. The roots act as an extraction well where bioreactor–cells within the plant transform chlorinated solvents and bind them in the roots, stems, and leaves. Once the trees are 5 years old, they will be cut down, sampled, and treated as hazardous waste.

Vandenberg is applying phytostabilization at site AOC 59 because it has adequate space for tree planting, and the contamination is found in shallow soil and groundwater, making this site a good candidate for the pilot study. Also, this technology is very “green”, aesthetically pleasing, and less expensive than traditional remediation techniques. Periodic updates will be presented at future CAB meetings regarding the progress at this site as well as information about contamination levels as a result of this new technology.

The last speaker to brief the CAB was Dr. Linda Fargo. Dr. Fargo encouraged CAB members to bring guests who they think might be interested in joining the CAB. She also asked if there were members who would volunteer to review draft documents and provide comments to 30 CES/CEV.

Upon closing, Col Kopp, 30 CES/CC, provided an update on the beach closures due to the snowy plover nesting season. Surf Beach is closed at this time because the base exceeded the allowed take limit for the year. The base has been working with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on a Snowy Plover Plan. A draft document was received and is now ready for public review and comment. The document is available at the Lompoc and Vandenberg AFB libraries. An Interim Management Plan has been drafted to provide guidance for next year’s nesting season. The long-term approach is to allow appropriate beach access that is a balanced for both protection of the snowy plover and local recreation.

Upon completion of the briefings, CAB members were invited to participate in a bus tour of the pilot study site, AOC 59.

The meeting was adjourned at 1200. The next CAB meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 29, 2001.