

Restoration Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

August 28th, 2024, 15:00 to 17:30 (PDT)

RAB Members in Attendance:

- Jon Welge (RAB Community Co-Chair)
- Lieutenant Colonel Maloy (Acting RAB Installation Co-Chair)
- Jaclyn Satira (Environmental Protection Agency)
- Nick Acklam (Washington State Department of Ecology)
- Doug Greenlund (City of Spokane Representative)
- Tom Binger (Spokane Regional Health District alternate)
- Charles Gruenenfelder (RAB Member)
- Dr. Hugh Lefcort (RAB Member)
- John Hancock (West Plains Water Coalition)
- Sonny Weathers (City of Medical Lake Representative)
- Hank Bynaker (City of Airway Heights Representative)
- Mo Noder (RAB Member)
- Dr. Fred Kirschner (Spokane Tribe Representative)
- Chad Pritchard (RAB Member)
- Jerry Goertz (Deep Creek Ranchettes)

Other Presenters and Air Force Employees in Attendance of Note

- Vanessa Urbach (AF Contractor) – Facilitator
- Mark Loucks (AFCEC)
- Jack Mapes (AFCEC RPM) – Presenter
- Megan Riccobono (AFCEC RPM) – Presenter

RAB MEETING

RAB Introduction and Opening Business

Vanessa Urbach (Facilitator) welcomed everyone to the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) and introduced Lieutenant Colonel Maloy.

Lieutenant Colonel Maloy introduced himself as the acting installation Co-Chair of the RAB filling in for Colonel LaMore. He spoke about his love for this community and his house in the area, and how excited Fairchild Air Force Base is to continue working with the community.

Jaclyn Satira introduced herself as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Remedial Project Manager (RPM); other RAB members introduced themselves down the line through Nick Acklam and back through Charles Gruenenfelder and down through Sonny Weathers.

Vanessa led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance and continued to the RAB mission statement and public code of conduct on Slides 3 and 4, and member expectations on Slide 5. The February 7th, 2024 RAB meeting minutes were then finalized by the board via a motion by Jon Welge seconded by the board.

Vanessa commenced the induction of two RAB member applicants: Chad Pritchard and Jerry Goertz.

Chad Pritchard introduced himself as a member of the Eastern Washington University Geology Department and a researcher on a PFAS fate and transport study being conducted in the West Plains.

Jerry Goertz introduced himself as a lifetime resident of the area, born and raised in Cheney, and the president of the Deep Creek Water Association/Deep Creek Ranchettes.

Vanessa asked the board to bring forward a motion to approve the new members.

Charles Gruenenfelder motioned to approve the new members; current members verbally and visually seconded.

Takeaways from the Hanford Advisory Board

Megan Riccobono spoke about the two days she spent at the Hanford Advisory Board (HAB). Jaclyn Satira was also in attendance for the first day. Megan explained that she has some takeaways to share to hopefully improve this RAB. Megan mentioned the HAB had a dedicated full-time facilitator, a legal representative, unique ways of communicating during Q&A such as

tilting nametags on their sides to signal that a member had a question, individual nametags, and comment periods. The HAB integrates “agency updates”, wherein every agency representative on the board would give an update on behalf of their agency to the HAB. Megan brought attention to two things from the HAB: the advice column and the round robin. The advice column consisted of voting members giving one piece of advice at every single meeting. The round robin consisted of members getting a topic to discuss at the end of the meeting.

Doug Greenlund asked about the feasibility of a dedicated facilitator in the budget.

Mark Loucks responded that the Air Force is recognizing the public interest for RABs and advocating for resources with people who control funding within the Environmental Restoration Program.

John Hancock motioned to endorse the Air Force advocating for more resources for communicating with the public. Members seconded.

Chuck Gruenfelder asked about the legal representative that was at the HAB.

Megan clarified that the legal representative was not present but was on a video call and would field questions. She spoke to possibly seeing if an AFCEC or Base legal representative could come to the RAB.

Chuck Gruenfelder motioned to recommend the Air Force have a legal expert available. Motion was seconded by other members.

Megan mentioned she will attempt to book the HAB’s venue for the November RAB because it is a large conference room with large screens and quality mics. Megan then mentioned the HAB’s six-month anonymous surveys that ask how the HAB can improve, those ideas are then incorporated into future meetings.

April listening session takeaways

Megan began by asking the board members how they felt about the April listening session and if they had any recommendations.

John Hancock emphasized the importance of anyone being able to answer a question if they know the answer to it— in other words, jumping in with the answer to a question.

Jon Welge appreciated that the listening session felt unscripted— that people spoke from their hearts.

Megan informed the RAB that next time the FAFB sampling area is expanded, the Air Force plans to do a pop-up listening session or open house. In addition to the sampling area, a map similar to the state's PFAS Pie Chart sampling area map will be created for FAFB's sampling area.

Nick Acklam expressed his intent for the state to incorporate their data as well, in order for both sets of data to be in one document/figure.

Jon Welge asked if the EPA and AF get together to decide on the 4 ppt trigger level.

Jaclyn answered that the AF is working on a funding plan and has told the EPA they will allow their input. Headquarters is providing that input so that is the delay, but she and Megan will share an update as soon as they have one.

Sonny Weathers mentioned the importance of posters to aide in educating the public before opening up a listening session/open house to a Q&A. Showing the public the effort and work that is taking place can help contextualize the work for the public.

Jaclyn responded by asking whether the RAB wants open houses to coincide with meetings or to separate them.

Megan agreed on separating the open houses and RAB meetings between two days.

Jon Welge suggested that separating them would be easier on people who are traveling.

Doug Greenlund noted that due to the listening sessions being very specific and RABs being more comprehensive that having them separate would be of benefit.

RAB SOP Discussion

Jack began by stating that the proposed draft SOP document was prepared in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), RAB Handbook, and Department of the Air Force Instruction (DAFI). Comments were received from Jaclyn Satira and John Hancock prior to the meeting. The RAB was asked if they wanted to address the comments from Jaclyn and John H before they go over the SOP or if all comments would like to be addressed as they go through the SOP.

Jon Welge suggested going over all comments from Jaclyn and John H one at a time and requested an extension for comments on the SOP.

Jack said any comments made today will be recorded in the minutes and the second draft of the SOP will be delivered to the RAB via email with the minutes to cross reference. After the SOP is ratified, it can continue to be a working document. Comments that mention

needing to verify accordance with CFR are not accepted or denied, but need to be reviewed to ensure they don't conflict with the CFR, which is the governing document. Jack continued to read comments from Jaclyn and John H for the group's discussion.

Mark Loucks: In response to a noted comment from John H regarding the FAFB Pollution Prevention Plan, Mark informed the RAB that each base has a Pollution Prevention Plan that looks for opportunities to reduce pollution bases already have, which is followed very closely.

John Hancock expressed interest in seeing that in a newsletter.

Jack confirmed that that is something that can be added to a newsletter topic.

John Hancock asked for clarification on what an Air Force duty is versus a RAB duty when it comes to public outreach.

Megan responded that in this context, the Air Force has a Public Affairs team that has a very specific way of contacting news media, and that AFCEC does not do that.

John Hancock noted that he would appreciate that distinction in writing.

Megan informed John Hancock that the response to his comment will be crossed out and a clearer one will be drafted.

Jon Welge expressed that public comment opportunities and outreach is a CERCLA requirement.

Megan and **Mark** confirmed that it was. Certain documents created by the Air Force are required to go to public comment per CERCLA.

Jon Welge noted that John H and Jerry's community organization would be effective amplifiers for public comment announcements.

Megan states that announcements for future public comment periods will be forwarded to John and Jerry to disperse within their organizations.

Jack notified the room that they were running short on time for further discussion. An opportunity for RAB members to make any comments verbally to be added into the next draft of the SOP was given to each member.

Sonny Weathers asked to further define section 9, the desire of a diverse group of 25 members.

Dr Kirschner expressed the need to further define "Restoration" in the context of the RAB versus Restoration in a natural resources sense.

Jon Welge asked the RAB if another three weeks for comment is realistic. Members visually approved. Megan said an email will go out reminding everyone that September 18th is the last day for comments.

Jon Welge motions that the RAB have prepared comments completed by the 18th day of September for this draft of the SOP. Members second.

TAPP Discussion

Jon Welge explained to members that the TAPP program will allow the RAB to hire individual, unbiased third-party experts who can review and explain results of remedial investigations and anything other restoration document in plain language. The RAB has four weeks to recommend someone, so if anyone has a name of an industry expert, they can feel free to suggest them.

Mark Loucks explained that it would be ideal to get the TAPP application done as early in the fiscal year as possible.

Public comment opportunity

Megan began public comment by highlighting a few proposed changes. She expressed the desire for more public comments on documents, and that an email will be sent out when any 30-day public comment period begins. Additionally, a list of every document uploaded to the Administrative Record will be sent to the RAB members on a quarterly basis.

Jaclyn and Megan clarified that the public comment period is required by CERCLA and, while not a RAB activity, the RAB is one way to get public participation.

Megan and Jack inform the RAB that Jack will be making a YouTube video on how to use the AR website.

Jon Welge asked when the next RAB will be.

Megan responded the plan is to have it in November, with validated data and possibly a determination on the EPA MCL.

Vanessa now opened public comment period.

Terry Horne from the audience asked if there was representation from Spokane County. She mentioned outreach in the Cheney Free Press and the need to start sampling bales of alfalfa

at farmers' markets. She described the lack of outreach to farmers and ranchers specifically. She mentioned the West Plains and Grand Rhonde Aquifers should be deemed sole source aquifers by the EPA. She moved onto the need for individuals to be informing rural West Plains residents of the issues. She emphasized the need for environmental impact studies for any developments in the West Plains.

A community member asked about an update on the EPA's guidelines for the Base's distribution of drinking water for people with affected wells.

Megan responded that if there are no other questions, the RAB could adjourn, and she could answer that question afterwards.

John Hancock commented that there are a lot of his neighbors who feel the most crucial info is related to how soon will something change an individual's home. John recommended that all of Air Force's messaging should include details on how this will affect individual homes and well owners. John mentions that when homeowners come to public meeting and don't get an answer to their question, it is difficult for them to trust the Air Force enough to continue to come to public meetings.

Chuck Gruenfelder motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Jon Welge and other members seconded.

Vanessa Urbach announced that the RAB meeting was adjourned at 17:08.