

To: West Valley Citizen Task Force  
From: Cindy Cook and Bill Logue, Citizen Task Force Facilitators  
Date: March 13, 2008  
Subject: **Summary of the February 27, 2008 Meeting**

## Next Meeting

The next Citizen Task Force Meeting will be held as follows:

Time & Date: **7:00 – 9:30 PM, March 26, 2008**  
Location: Ashford Office Complex  
9030 Route 219  
West Valley, NY

**Note:** All participants must be United States citizens and must bring photo identification. If you have questions or comments regarding the upcoming meeting or this summary, please contact Bill Logue (860-521-9122, [bill@loguegroup.com](mailto:bill@loguegroup.com)) or Cindy Cook (802-223-1330, [ccook@adamantaccord.com](mailto:ccook@adamantaccord.com)).

## CTF Participants

**CTF Members and Alternates attending:** Joe Atkinson, Mike Brisky, Rob Dallas, Judy Einach, Chris Gerwitz, Mike Hutchinson, Lee Lambert, Joe Patti, Chris Pawenski, John Pfeffer, Warren Schmidt, Tim Siepel, Bill Snyder, Ray Vaughan, and Eric Wohlers.

## Agency Participants and Observers

*Department of Energy (DOE):* Bryan Bower, Jennifer Dundas

*New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA):* Tom Attridge, Paul Bembia

*West Valley Environmental Services, LLC (WVES):* Sonja Allen, Ken Alkema, John Chamberlain, Steve Warren

*Observers:* Kathy Kellogg (Buffalo News).

## Meeting Summary

Cindy Cook and Bill Logue welcomed the group. The meeting agenda and the meeting documents were distributed, including the Nuclear Regulatory Commission response to the CTF letter of November 28, 2007.<sup>1</sup> CTF members also received a copy of the draft Summary of Accomplishments - 2007.

## DOE Update

Bryan Bower of DOE provided an update of activities at the site. This included:

- **Safety.** It has been 10 months without a lost-time illness or injury; it is possible to reach 1 million hours this year. There were two non-injury safety incidents, both are being investigated. The first was a waste box that slipped out of a sling while being moved in the Remote-Handled

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<sup>1</sup> The documents are listed at the end of this summary and may be found at [www.westvalleyctf.org](http://www.westvalleyctf.org)

Waste Facility (RHWF); the operator was never in danger and no injuries were reported. Work was suspended for one week. The second incident was a van accident in whiteout conditions. Eight employees were passengers, no injuries were reported.

- **Accomplishments.** A link belt crane was transferred to the town of Providence, NY; the drum cell weather enclosures were removed; and 250 packages of suspect transuranic waste have been analyzed with 70 being classified as low-level waste (LLW). Several CTF members inquired about the process for local towns to receive surplus and excess equipment and suggested that local/host communities be given priority in receiving the equipment. Mr. Bower explained that equipment no longer needed at the site is offered to other sites within the DOE complex, then other federal agencies, then local and state agencies, and finally it is posted on the internet for auction. He will provide the CTF with information concerning the process and contact information for DOE's contracting officer.
- **On-going Work.** Radiological decontamination is underway in three cells of the Main Plant Process Building (MPPB), debris is being removed and fixative applied to loose contamination. The former Vitrification Facility is now operational for remote-handled waste processing. Eleven structures are or will be prepared for demolition and nine outdoor storage areas are being cleared. This work will reduce the footprint that needs to be actively managed.
- **Funding.** DOE remains committed to implementing The Way Ahead. Mr. Bower described the planned work to provide context to the funding discussion. He noted that in 2008, in addition to the work in the WVES contract, DOE will cap the NDA, perform RCRA sampling of the North Plateau Groundwater Plume, develop plans for drying the high-level waste (HLW) tanks and vaults, and issue the draft EIS for review. Over the next four years DOE plans to ship the legacy waste; prepare the MPPB, Vitrification Facility and RHWF for demolition; remove unneeded facilities, dry the HLW tanks and vaults, install systems to contain the Sr-90 groundwater plume and investigate ways to relocate the HLW canisters from the MPPB.

Mr. Bower stated that the FY 2008 budget is \$55,484,000 and the President's FY 2009 budget is \$59 million. Through a competitive bidding process DOE was able to secure a contract with West Valley Environmental Services for \$160 million over four years. In addition to the budgeted amounts for 2007, the WVDP received additional funding in two increments totaling \$15 million. For 2008 there is a committed carryover of \$20 million which will be added to the budgeted \$55 million.

Mr. Bower noted that the WVDP is funded through the non-defense Environmental Management budget of DOE. The annual Environmental Management budget for non-defense projects is about \$200 million and the defense portion is approximately \$5 billion. Funding decisions for Environmental Management are risk based according to the following priorities: 1) liquid HLW; 2) special nuclear material; 3) transuranic waste and LLW; 4) soil and groundwater contamination; and 5) demolition and decommissioning. Most of the planned WVDP work falls into this last – and lowest – category. However, WVDP is among the highest of the priorities among sites in that category. Other sites in the non-defense projects category include two reactors at Brookhaven and the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center.

There was extensive discussion regarding project funding and the implications for future budgets. Paul Bembia of NYSERDA encouraged the CTF to advocate for consistent funding and for additional funding for specific work that NYSERDA believes should be done as soon as possible. He noted that extensive sampling and analysis will be needed to characterize the Sr-90 ground water plume and to design an effective plume remediation strategy. This characterization work will have to be postponed for at least a year if the project is funded at the level currently proposed. CTF members agreed to write a letter to the Congressional delegation requesting additional funding for specific projects including the plume characterization. CTF members will send suggestions regarding this letter to the facilitators who will work with Mike Hutchinson and Joe Patti to develop a draft letter. The letter will then be circulated to the CTF in advance of the March CTF meeting. The CTF intends to complete the letter at the March meeting and will discuss the possibility of sending a representative to meet with the Congressional delegation in Washington, DC to discuss project funding.

- **Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).** Mr. Bower stated that the DEIS is his top priority because work at the site after 2011 is contingent upon completion of the EIS Record of Decision by that time. So that there will be no confusion as to which is the controlling draft EIS, a CTF member asked that the DEIS that will be released this year be clearly identified as a supplement to the 1996 draft EIS. John Chamberlain indicated that the forthcoming draft EIS would be identified as a revision of the 1996 EIS which was re-scoped in 2003.

## 2008 Environmental Monitoring Program

John Chamberlain of WVES made a presentation summarizing the Environmental Monitoring Program for 2008 and the changes from the monitoring conducted in previous years. The purpose of the Environmental Monitoring Plan is “to ensure that public health and safety and the environment continue to be protected with respect to potential releases of radioactive and hazardous substances from current site activities.”

Both radiological and hazardous waste monitoring is conducted at the site and in the vicinity of the site. Some monitoring is required by regulation and some is voluntary. Detailed monitoring data may be found in the WVDP Annual Site Environmental Reports (ASER). These reports are released mid-year. All reports for 1982 through 2006 are available at <http://www.wv.doe.gov/index.html>. Mr. Chamberlain’s presentation contained many maps and graphics depicting the locations of the various types of monitoring and monitoring changes. The presentation may be viewed with the February 2008 meeting materials at [www.westvalleyctf.org](http://www.westvalleyctf.org).

Mr. Chamberlain described what is monitored, including: Direct radiation; air, surface water, groundwater, and food pathways. Monitoring takes place within the 200 acres of the WVDP site, within the bounds of the Western New York Nuclear Service Center (the 3,100 acres) and off-site in concentric rings with “near” monitoring being up to 10 km and “far” monitoring beyond 10 km. Background radiation from manmade and natural sources is monitored for baseline comparative purposes.

Monitoring includes wells, seep or “grab” sampling of surface waters, dosimeters worn by individuals and/or placed in certain locations, and collecting data from meteorological towers.

Samples are taken at varying time frames and analyzed for different reasons depending on the location, historical trends and other factors. Monitoring may be decreased or discontinued at a given location for several reasons including a long record of negative results, discontinuation of site work that might lead to contamination, or the removal of the potential contamination source. Monitoring may be added in response to new information (e.g., plume migration) or a new project activity (e.g., air monitoring increased during demolition of the MPPB). Chapter 1 of the ASER provides a plain English description of the monitoring program and Appendix A provides the details. In most situations where monitoring is discontinued or decreased in frequency from the previous monitoring regimen, it could easily be reinstated, if needed, because the sampling locations are preserved.

The presentation included maps showing the locations of:

- 1) on-site and off-site direct radiation monitoring;
- 2) on-site air sampling;
- 3) on-site surface/drinking water, soil/sediment sampling;
- 4) on-site storm water outfalls;
- 5) rail spur storm water outfalls
- 6) groundwater radiological indicators;
- 7) the North Plateau Groundwater Plume;
- 8) near-site biological sampling (venison, beef and milk); and
- 9) background.

Several CTF members noted that monitoring is conducted along the tributaries to Cattaraugus Creek and that portions of Frank’s Creek are not monitored. Frank’s creek flows past the project site into Buttermilk Creek then into Cattaraugus Creek. Surface water from the site is monitored where it drains into Frank’s Creek.

The planned cost of monitoring is about \$1 million for 2008. Mr. Chamberlain noted that all monitoring data is provided to regulators.

The presentation included graphs depicting changes in the locations and frequency of sampling and the rationale for the changes. Off-site sampling between 5 and 10 km for air and drinking water has been discontinued. Ten off-site drinking water locations up-gradient from the site have been monitored for many years, with findings consistent with background readings. WVES representatives made phone calls and sent letters to the involved site neighbors to notify them that off-site sampling of drinking water was being discontinued.

WVES is discontinuing air monitoring at three locations along the perimeter of the Western New York Service Center and at two locations, one near Springville and one near West Valley. Data collected from these locations since the 1980’s has been indistinguishable from background locations. Several CTF

members encouraged DOE to continue air sampling because monitoring provides surety to community members that the project is not affecting the air they breathe.

Paul Bembia noted that NYSERDA is reviewing changes for the current year and will provide comments to DOE and a copy to the CTF. He also stated that SDA monitoring was not shown on the maps presented because no changes have occurred and that if any occur they will be shared with the CTF.

## **CTF Discussion of the Core Team Preferred Alternative**

Each CTF member present commented on their impression of the Core Team Preferred Alternative. All expressed appreciation concerning progress at the site, including the planned demolition of the MPPB and remediation of the North Plateau Groundwater Plume. Several members also said that they were pleased that DOE has not proposed grouting the HLW tanks in place because that would make the ultimate removal of the HLW tanks much more difficult. Members also expressed sincere appreciation for how the agencies are working together to discuss, address and resolve issues. A CTF member noted that the Core Team's Preferred Alternative seemed to benefit the workforce and community as it would provide job stability for the term of the contract and beyond if it is implemented. Members expressed frustration that the decision on the ultimate cleanup is being delayed for 30 years.

## **Upcoming Meeting Agendas**

The facilitators provided a brief overview of the Agenda Work Group call held on February 26. A summary of that call is available with the February 2008 materials on the website at [www.westvalleyctf.org](http://www.westvalleyctf.org). The CTF agreed that the March meeting should include a regulatory overview, finalizing the letter to Congressional delegates on funding and a discussion of the possibility of arranging a meeting with the Congressional delegation in Washington, DC regarding site funding. After CTF is presented with an overview of the regulations that apply to the site, if the CTF wants additional detail on a particular regulation, the appropriate agency will be invited to present on that topic at a later meeting.

The April meeting is likely to address the North Plateau Groundwater Plume and how the Construction Demolition and Debris Landfill (CDDL) may affect spread of the plume.

## **Annual Meeting**

The CTF reviewed and accepted the Summary of Accomplishments – 2007. The facilitators noted that at future meetings more time would be allotted for discussion and care would be taken to try to identify issues that should carryover from one meeting to the next.

## **Observer Comments**

Tom Attridge, NYSERDA, encouraged the CTF members to check out the new CTF website. He noted the new website has been updated and is more user-friendly than the previous CTF website.

## ***Action Items***

<b>Action</b>	<b>Assigned To</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Draft budget letter to Congressional Delegation	Patti, Hutchinson assisted by Logue/Cook	3/19/08
DOE surplus equipment information and contact	Bower/DOE	Done
Revised mail and email lists to Eric Wohlers and Bryan Bower	Logue	3/14/08
Map of offsite air monitoring locations for Bill Snyder	Chamberlain	Done
Maps of surface water sampling locations for Lee Lambert	Chamberlain	Done
Direct radiation monitoring results for Ray Vaughan	Chamberlain	3/14/08
Summary of monitoring required by regulatory agencies	Chamberlain	3/14/08

## ***Documents Distributed***

<b>Document Description</b>	<b>Date; Generated by</b>
Agenda	Cook/Logue; 2/27/08
WVDP Update	DOE; 2/27/08
WVDP Environmental Monitoring Program	WVES; 2/27/08
2007 Year End Summary	Logue/Cook; 2/27/08
NRC Letter Dated 2/15/08 Responding to CTF letter of 11/28/07	NRC; 2/15/08
Compilation of News Articles	NYSERDA