

To: West Valley Citizen Task Force
From: Bill Logue, Citizen Task Force Facilitator
Date: August 22, 2017
Subject: **Summary of the June 28, 2017 Meeting**

Next Meeting

Date & Time: **September 27, 2017, 6:30 – 9:00 PM**
Location: Ashford Office Complex
9030 Route 219
West Valley, NY

CTF Members and Alternates Attending

Rob Dallas, Charlie Davis, Barbara Frackiewicz, Todd Gates, Paul Kranz*, Kathy McGoldrick, Joe Patti, John Pfeffer, Ray Vaughan, Tim Zerfas.

Agency Participants and Observers

Department of Energy (DOE): Bryan Bower, Martin Krentz, Moira Maloney, Audrey Seeley, Zintars Zadins.

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA): Paul Bembia, Janice Dean*, Brad Frank, Lee Gordon*, Andrea Mellon, Jane Pietraszek.

CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley, LLC. (CHBWV): Scott Anderson, Cindy Dayton.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC): Ken Martin.

Others: Drew Wayne, Office of Representative Reed. Greg Tucker, Erosion subject matter expert to agencies.

Public: Sonja Elliott, Paul Siepinski, Barbara Warren*.

INTRODUCTIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Bill Logue welcomed all present and reviewed the meeting agenda and materials¹. The group welcomed Tim Zerfas to the CTF as the alternate for Eric Wohlers representative of Cattaraugus County. Paul Bembia informed the CTF that Alicia Barton was the new NYSERDA President & CEO. He reviewed Ms. Barton's qualifications and stated that staff had met her via a video conference her first day on the job and that she planned to visit the site soon to become more familiar with the work and issues. Mr. Bower noted that Jim Owendoff has been named as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Office of Environmental Management. In this role, he will also be the Acting Assistant Secretary until a Presidential nominee is approved.

DOE BUDGET UPDATE

Bryan Bower of DOE provided an update on the WVDP budget. He noted that the federal budget is currently funded under the Omnibus Appropriations bill and, as enacted, the Non-Defense portion is \$66.413 million and Safeguards and Security is \$3.215 million for a total of \$69.628 million. The president's request for FY 2018 for the Non-Defense portion is \$60.585 million and for Safeguards and Security is \$3.098 million for a total of \$63.683 million, an amount he said would be sufficient to complete work planned for the 2018 fiscal year.

CHBWV PROJECT UPDATE

Scott Anderson of CHBWV presented a project update. He introduced Janice Williams who is replacing John Rendall as CHBWV Manager of Regulatory Strategy. Lynette Bennett has taken an opportunity at a site in Paducah, Kentucky. Cindy Dayton will perform Lynette's duties in the interim.

Safety. Mr. Anderson noted that there had been minor injuries, such as a twisted knee, with a lost-time recordable case on April 19 and the last recordable case on May 17. As a result the rolling twelve-month average for Total Recordable Cases is 1.3 and Days Away, Restrictions, Transfers at 1.0. Since this is a rolling twelve-month average, with no further incidents, these number will stay the same for several month before they will start to diminish with each month. On June 14th a Site-Wide Safety Day was held with demonstrations of fall

¹ Each is listed at the end of this summary and may be found at www.westvalleyctf.org

* Participated by telephone.

protection, waste handling, protective clothing and a visit by the bomb squad.

Deactivation Progress. The deactivation of the Vitrification Facility (VF) is complete. Demolition start had been deferred, however, with additional funding in the current fiscal year it will now start about August 1. The Main Plant Process Building (MPPB) deactivation is 71% complete. Nineteen of 47 other facilities on the site have been demolished, many of these were small. No further work is currently planned this year on these facilities. Six crews are performing deactivation and decontamination work in the MPPB. A number of the MPPB locations are difficult to enter and, due to contamination, crews must wear protective clothing with supplied air as they bring in and take out tools and perform work. A question was raised on ventilation changes, pathways and safety within the MPPB. Marty Krentz of DOE said a 90-day letter was being prepared for EPA concerning the planned shutdown of the MPPB stack. There followed a brief discussion on ventilation concerning recent changes and deactivation processes and portable ventilation units. CHBWV will provide a presentation at the next meeting.

Infrastructure Improvements. With the deactivation process for the MPPB, removal of other facilities and age deterioration, a number of infrastructure improvements, reconfiguration and repairs have been initiated. These include a new water treatment system building, rerouting water lines, a pad for a new data center and planning for on-site electrical distribution and natural gas service. The water treatment building will replace the existing water distribution system that utilizes the Utility Room, which is being prepared for demolition. Potable water for the site will be treated in the new water treatment building before distribution. Water will also be treated for iron due to high naturally occurring iron.

Waste Management and Disposal. Legacy Waste shipping has resumed with the additional funding and is 57% complete with full completion expected for October 2018 ahead of the baseline date of April 2019.

Additional FY 2017 Funding. Mr. Anderson reviewed the planned use of the additional approximately \$7 million in FY 2017 funds. These include \$3.5 million in continuing operations, \$1.7 million for acceleration of VF demolition, \$.5 million in waste shipping, \$.5 million for gas/electric utility design and \$.5 million for MPPB below grade sampling and analysis. The funds for continuing operations are set aside this fiscal year in the event of a continuing resolution at the start of the 2018 fiscal year.

HOUSE RESOLUTION 2389

Drew Wayne, Policy Director for Representative Tom Reed joined the meeting by phone. Mr. Wayne thanked the CTF and noted that the site was a top priority for Representative Reed. He reviewed the two parts of House Resolution 2389 proposed by Representative Reed in May. The first portion, Part (a), authorizes funding for WVDP at \$75 million annually through 2026. He noted that WVDP funding authorization had expired in the early 1980s and that as part of the budget control a number of House members were looking at areas of unauthorized funding in the budget. The second portion, Part (b), reclassifies the waste at the site as waste resulting from atomic energy defense activities, as defined by the Nuclear Waste Policy Act §2. This would provide a disposal pathway with defense wastes and reduce the disposal costs. This reclassification approach is in line with the letter NYSEDA sent to DOE and obviate the need for New York State taxpayers to be burdened with paying a very high disposal fee.

Mr. Wayne stated that outreach to staff on the House Appropriations Committee had been initiated and that additional opportunities with Energy and Commerce existed. He was unsure as to whether the resolution would pass but felt that at a minimum it would influence the conversation around these issues.

In response to a question, Mr. Wayne stated that discussions with the Senate for a companion bill have not been initiated. John Pfeffer indicated that staff for Senator Lamar Alexander might be receptive and Todd Gates indicated that Senator Schumer's staff was following issues at the site. In concluding, Mr. Wayne noted that details in the current Non-Defense Environmental Management appropriations bill for FY 2018 were not available and that the top line amounts were \$42 million lower and that the WVDP is one-fourth of the line item. This scenario has occurred before and he said he would let the CTF know of any details that emerged. He thanked the CTF.

EROSION MODELING ISSUES

CTF member Ray Vaughan addressed five topics in his presentation "Erosion Modeling Issues that Need Attention and Sensitivity Analysis." The first two topics addressed his concerns that the principal causes of

erosion, and its central importance to risk, were being diluted by other issues in the current modeling and that channelized flow in Erdman Brook had been modeled incorrectly in the past and might still be modeled incorrectly. He stated that erosion is a variable with a large potential effect that sensitivity analysis should identify. Concerning Erdman Brook channel flow he stated that if the data and subroutines from prior modeling continued to be used the current erosion modeling efforts may not recognize the importance of erosion. Mr. Vaughan showed comparisons of information from the 1996 and 2010 EIS to demonstrate the degree of impact of underlying assumptions on receptor dose by as much as a factor of 75,000 or 300,000 mrem/year versus 4 mrem/year. Lastly on this issue, he noted that the 2010 EIS did not contemplate serious breaching of the burial grounds from erosion as the 1996 EIS had. Concerning channelized flow of Erdman Brook Mr. Vaughan raised questions about how flow was modeled in a depression near the onsite road and the existence of culverts which appear to have been treated as embankments/checkdams in the 2010 EIS thereby reducing erosion. In the current model the flow appears to be treated as slot embankments which will widen. He encouraged a “consistent and realistic approach.”

The third issue he raised was the choice of the Franks Creek watershed rather than the Buttermilk Creek watershed for modeling because that selection could reduce the robustness of the model and results due to the smaller data sets. He also questioned if and how the effects of this choice on model robustness would be evaluated by a sensitivity analysis.

Fourth, he stated that the 10-year time-steps for model runs are too long unless many identical model runs are conducted. These longer time steps are not statistically equivalent on the rainfall intensity-frequency (RIF) distribution. Lastly, Mr. Vaughan stated that he felt the model runs are apparently using incorrect RIF distributions citing the 2010 EIS as substantially low and the apparent application of the same data to the current model. He then cited data and calculations methods and sources for mean depth of rainfall during storms and “wet scenarios” comparing data from the 2010 EIS and USDA rainfall data for various return intervals of storms. He stated that the USDA data is the generally accepted data and expressed concern about the implications for the stochastic rainfall generators in the models. Mr. Vaughan then extrapolated the impacts of the data choices on the amount of downcutting, incision and deposition and large-scale erosional exhumation on the site. He encouraged the use of the USDA data to see the impacts on the modeling.

Greg Tucker, a member of the Phase 1 Studies Erosion Working Group (EWG), responded with clarifications and engaged in a dialogue with Mr. Vaughan. With regard to the channelized flow, Mr. Tucker stated that flow was not blocked or slowed in either the 2010 model or in the current model. Both models used an algorithm that allowed flow over depressions in the topography. He noted that mean rainfall intensity (not mean rainfall depth) is multiplied by the negative natural log of a random number in his stochastic rainfall model. With respect to the size of the data sets he noted that recent LiDAR data and the digital elevation models defaulted at the 3 foot/grid cell generating 4 million data points and that the models could handle about 100,000. He continued noting that use of a smaller model domain (Franks Creek watershed instead of the entire Buttermilk Creek watershed) allows for smaller grid cells, and therefore an improved ability for models to represent erosional features such as gullies. He noted that the EWG was exploring the size of sub-steps and how that matters. Mr. Gordon of NYSERDA noted that the Phase 1 Studies landscape evolution model was separate from the PPA and that the agencies were interested in seeing how this work would be integrated into the more simplified PPA erosion model. At the conclusion of the interchange Mr. Vaughan and Mr. Tucker agreed to have technical discussion offline to clarify what if any of Mr. Vaughan’s concerns remain.

A CTF member commented that the erosion modeling became important only in the event that a close-in-place alternative was selected, something he believed most CTF members did not want. Mr. Bembia remarked that the modeling would play a role in making a technically defensible decision.

ASHFORD UPDATE

CTF member John Pfeffer reported on his trip to Washington in his role as an Ashford Councilman. His participation was as part of the Town’s involvement with the Energy Communities Alliance (ECA). The group met with staff members in congress. Mr. Pfeffer shared an ECA proposal for legislative clarification of the definition of defense high-level waste to create additional disposal pathways and expedite cleanup. Mr. Bembia noted the proposal would reclassify HLW as TRU waste making a pathway for disposal for those wastes at WIPP.

Ashford Town Supervisor Charlie Davis informed the CTF that the town was working on a new master plan that included considerations for site reuse at the Western New York Nuclear Service Center. The town is exploring the potential for a solar farm on the site. The business model being proposed would have it developed at no cost to the town. A CTF member noted that the town might also qualify for low cost electricity from Niagara Hydro.

OTHER CTF COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

A member asked about what was in the rail cars on the local siding. Several members present noted that empty cars stored there because the only other location blocked views to local businesses. The group agreed to skip the July meeting and in September have a presentation on ventilation and a follow-up on Mr. Vaughan’s concerns.

OBSERVER COMMENTS

An observer inquired about mishaps at other facilities and encouraged the CTF to receive information on how WVDP would handle similar issues. Mr. Bower stated that DOE sites and activities were unique and did not necessarily correlate. Nonetheless, he stated that site managers received daily briefings on any incidents and analyzed them for implications for the WVDP.

ACTION ITEMS

Action	Who; When
Presentation on MPPB ventilation	CHBWV; Next CTF Meeting
Follow-up on Erosion Modeling Concerns	Vaughan/Maloney/ Gordon/Tucker Summer

DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED

Description	Generated by; Date
Meeting Agenda	Logue; 6/28/17
DOE Budget Update	DOE;
Project Update	CHBWV; 6/28/17
House Resolution 2389	5/4/17
Erosion Modeling Issues that Need Attention and Sensitivity Analysis	Vaughan; 6/28/17
News Clippings Distributed at Meeting	NYSERDA; 6/28/17