

**Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Meeting
Recreation Center
U.S. Army Soldier Systems. Center
October 6, 2005
Meeting Minutes**

I. Attendance

RAB Members Present

James Fitzgerald	Community Member
Marco Kaltofen	Co-Chair, Community Member
Elizabeth McCoy	Employee Member, Natick Soldier Center
John McHugh	Restoration Officer, Environmental, Safety, and Health Office (ESHO), U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center (SSC)
A. Richard Miller	Community Member
Dr. Kannan Vembu	Representative of Natick Board of Selectmen
Christine Williams	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

RAB Members Absent

Robert Campbell	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP)
Dr. Charles Czeisler	Community Member, Lakewood Association
Tony Doheny Jr.	Community Member
Sid Gantman	Community Member
Steven Lubic	Representative of Natick Board of Selectman
Joel McCassie	Co-Chair, ESHO SSC
James Straub	Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
Dr. Harlee Strauss	Community Representative

Others in Attendance

Diane Anderson	Recorder, ICF Consulting
Michelle Bonanca	ESHO, SSC
James Connolly	ESHO, SSC
Ann Marie Desmarais	Environmental Insight
Darren Gainer	ECC
Stacey Greendlinger	U.S. EPA
Robin Nesbeda	Environmental Consultant, ICF Consulting
Kevin Palaia	Environmental Consultant, ICF Consulting
Jeffrey Pickett	Environmental Consultant, Mactec
Harold Prebensen	ESHO, SSC
Rod Rustad	Environmental Consultant, Mactec
Amy Rosenstein	Environmental Consultant, ICF Consulting
Kathleen Thrun	Environmental Consultant, ICF Consulting

II. Handouts

1. Draft Fish Consumption Human Health Risk Management Memorandum Update, ICF Consulting Presentation
2. Performance Based Contracting Update, Soldier Systems Center
3. Environmental Report, Number 12, U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center, Natick Labs, Natick, Massachusetts

III. Meeting Minutes

Mr. McHugh called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm and asked if there were any comments, changes, or revisions to the May 12, 2005 RAB meeting minutes.

The minutes were accepted without amendment.

General Comments

Mr. Kaltofen said that he had an award for Steven Lubic, who was not in attendance at the meeting.

Mr. Kaltofen stated that the Board of Selectmen had not been properly informed of the RAB meetings, and the meetings had not been properly posted in the town hall. He said that meeting notices and agenda will be now going to town clerk prior to each future meeting.

Draft Fish Consumption Human Health Risk Management Memorandum Update

Ms. Amy Rosenstein began the presentation on the Lake Cochituate fish consumption risk assessment update.

Ms. Rosenstein stated that on December 9, 2004 the RAB, regulators, Cochituate State Park, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (MADCR), and town of Natick were provided with the Draft Final Sediment Risk Technical Memorandum for review. The results of the fish ingestion human health risk part of this document were presented at the May 12, 2005 RAB meeting.

Ms. Rosenstein stated that for the human health risk assessment, largemouth bass fillet data were used as a representative native game fish collected on Lake Cochituate. The fish ingestion rate was based on an available Lake Cochituate specific creel survey. Ms. Rosenstein summarized the results of the risk assessment including:

- The results showed that the average cancer risks were within the range considered acceptable by the EPA, however, the Reasonable Maximum Exposure (RME) exceeded the EPA levels, both at SSC and other Lake locations.
- For the non-cancer hazard index calculations, hazard indices exceeded one, a potential level of concern for both average and reasonable maximum scenarios at the site, while at the reference locations, the average was 1 and the RME was greater than 1.
- The risks were primarily driven by polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) that were detected in largemouth bass.

Ms. Rosenstein stated that public comments received on the risk assessment results focused on the applicability on the fish ingestion rate that was derived from a winter creel survey, the

exclusive use of largemouth bass data, and the use of fillet data as opposed to whole fish, including cooking methods for the fish. Ms. Rosenstein indicated that in order to address the public comments, the Army is conducting an angler survey at Lake Cochituate. The work plan and survey instrument were written using EPA guidance for conducting fish and wildlife surveys, as well as published survey methodology. The work plan and survey instrument were reviewed by regulators as well as technical experts.

Ms. Rosenstein indicated that the survey began in August and will continue until the end of October, mainly to take into account the recent stocking of the Middle and North Ponds of Lake Cochituate with trout, and the anglers who come specifically for that type of fishing.

Mr. Kaltofen asked if, for the survey, the Native American encampment was included.

Ms. Rosenstein said that this would be addressed later, but surveys were conducted at the State Park on September 25, which was one of the days when the annual Native American gathering was occurring.

Ms. Rosenstein then introduced the key components of survey, including:

- Locations of the survey were based on suggestions from RAB members, local anglers, and state park employees for the most common fishing area of lake. Additionally, pilot studies were conducted by boat on the lake to observe where people were actually fishing.
- Eleven separate areas on the 3 ponds of Lake Cochituate, as well as Fisk Pond, were identified. Survey blocks were conducted in 4-hour periods including morning, mid-day, and evening – initially visiting all 11 areas at the Lake. Later the focus was on the areas where most anglers were found, and the survey periods for these areas were often extended beyond the 4-hour period.
- The most popular fishing locations were the Route 135 culvert area (including Fisk Pond), the State Park across from Route 30 (Car Top Boat Access), and the State Park boat ramp where boat anglers removed their boats from the Lake. Often these sites were visited several times during each survey period.

Dr. Vembu asked where the peak numbers were during the day.

Ms. Rosenstein responded that the evening was the most popular, generally from approximately 3:00pm till sunset. She stated that morning anglers were sparse.

Dr. Vembu asked what the average number of interviews was per day.

Ms. Rosenstein responded that the most interviews per day were 12 interviews, and the least were 2 to 4 interviews.

Ms. Rosenstein then discussed the key survey questions that were asked of each interviewee, including:

- Are you a Take Home angler or Catch and Release angler.
- Looked in creel (catch for the day) -- asked how many fish have you caught today, what did you catch, species, sizes. If they take home fish, what do you plan to do with them, freeze, eat, and prepare them?
- Asked if they recalled how many fish they caught during this fishing season and if they fish in other seasons (spring, fall, winter) – asked what species, size, how many caught,

- how were they prepared, cooking methods, who eats the fish, and how much to they eat.
- Asked similar questions about total catch for the entire past year.
- What their native language was, their home town?

Ms. Rosenstein stated that surveys were conducted both on-shore and from a boat, with about 135 surveys performed to date. More boat surveys were planned, but were not carried out because they were less productive than the on-shore surveys and were logistically more difficult due primarily to the State Park boat ramp hours. She stated that the surveys included holiday weekends – Saturdays, Sundays, and different days of the week.

Mr. Miller asked how many surveys were boat surveys.

Ms. Rosenstein said that of the survey blocks, three survey blocks were with boats, two on weekdays and one weekend. She said that many of the people interviewed were people at the boat ramp and they were counted as boat fishermen, and occasionally boats were interviewed from the shore because they were so close.

Mr. Miller asked if about 30 percent would be representative of boat surveys.

Ms. Rosenstein stated that she was not sure, but the majority of people interviewed were people on foot, or at the boat ramp taking boats out.

Mr. Miller asked if the survey data were available or if it could be provided later.

Mr. McHugh answered that the survey was still ongoing and expected to end at the end of October.

Mr. Miller requested both the results and the raw data, once the surveys are complete.

Ms. Rosenstein said that part of next steps were to continue the survey through October, analyze the data and if enough survey respondents were take home anglers who ate their fish, a new ingestion rate could be calculated of these people. A report would be produced describing the survey results and any new ingestion rate calculations.

Ms. Rosenstein stated that information was collected on two separate categories: individuals who take home native and stocked species, and those that take home only stocked species, such as trout and salmon. Ms. Rosenstein stated that we would evaluate whether there are enough data to warrant a re-calculation of the fish ingestion risks.

Ms. Rosenstein also said that stocking occurred last Monday with 1,000 trout, each 12 inches long or greater, so there would probably be good fishing and that surveys would be conducted over the next few weeks to encompass this anticipated good fishing period.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if they stocked both lakes.

Ms. Rosenstein said that they stocked the Middle and North Ponds.

Mr. Miller asked how the survey was coordinated with the State or State Fisheries and Wildlife.

Ms. Rosenstein replied that the State had a chance to review the Work Plan, including the proposed timing of the survey. However, the exact days and times were not coordinated, as the schedule changed largely based on weather and when popular fishing times were expected.

Mr. Miller replied that he didn't realize that it wouldn't be coordinated and didn't know to what degree good questions and more useful data might have been received.

Ms. Rosenstein said that the State did have a chance to review the Work Plan and the survey, and they were aware that the survey was taking place.

Mr. Kaltofen asked where the reference location was with respect to the fish ingestion risk assessment results.

Mr. Palaia answered that the fish used for reference were from the Possum Hollow Lane and Crescent Street locations along the western side of South Pond.

Mr. Kaltofen asked of the EPA, how meaningful is it that the risk estimates at SSC are greater than 1 and greater than the reference location, and if this was within the realm of concern or too close to call.

Ms. Williams stated that she did not know the answer, but that the SSC risk is above the reference risk and EPA's acceptable risk range, however, it is pretty close - just double.

Mr. Kaltofen asked if the risk estimates were based on largemouth bass fillets and PCB content.

Ms. Rosenstein answered that the majority of the risks were associated with PCBs, using largemouth bass fillet data.

Mr. Kaltofen stated that one of our prior discussions was using fillet data versus whole fish data. He stated that Mr. Ken Munney of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wanted comparison data between whole body and fillet PCB concentrations at other sites, and he passed this on to him, but he didn't appear to have that information.

Ms. Williams said that she hadn't spoken to Mr. Munney.

Mr. Miller asked why the background fish are background fish, and how do we know they are not just swimming throughout a larger area.

Ms. Rosenstein said that they discussed the home range of the fish at previous meetings and the home ranges that were selected were representative of the species considered.

Mr. Miller asked why we are confident about that, and whether we are overextending what we know.

Mr. Kaltofen asked if the EPA has guidance on home ranges of largemouth bass.

Ms. Williams stated that she didn't know if EPA has that, but Mr. Ken Munney of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reviewed the home ranges that the Army used and he considered them reasonable.

Mr. Palaia stated that as part of the ecological risk assessment a couple years ago, exposure units/home ranges were developed for various species of fish. During the development of these ranges, Mr. Munney had an opportunity to review them and there were considerable discussions regarding the home range of largemouth bass and bluegill. Based on the published literature, professional judgement, and input from Mr. Munney, it was determined that the western side of the lake was likely to be a separate home range from the area around the SSC facility.

Mr. Kaltofen asked if you could tag fish to determine home range.

Mr. McHugh and Mr. Miller both commented on the logistical difficulties of being able to track and catch tagged fish.

Mr. Kaltofen asked that if the results of the survey suggest that people are not preparing their fish the way we anticipated, if they're catching species other than largemouth bass, and if the ingestion rate is higher or lower than anticipated -- are these things that will be used to re-calculate risk estimates.

Ms. Rosenstein responded that all of those factors would be considered when deciding on whether to re-calculate risks.

Mr. Kaltofen asked if we had whole body concentrations.

Ms. Rosenstein stated that we do have whole body concentrations for some species, as part of the ecological risk assessment.

Mr. Palaia specified that we have whole body concentrations for bass, bluegill, eel, and possibly pumpkinseed.

Mr. Vembu asked if there were any initial findings that could be discussed, and are the results different or the same as expected.

Ms. Rosenstein said that Lake Cochituate is well known to a variety of anglers from different local ethnic groups, as well as from Boston and out of state. The Lake supports a very popular bass fishing population. She stated that the survey was conducted on one of the days of the Native American gathering at the State Park, and nobody was observed fishing. She indicated that she did meet a group from Natick, and others from New Hampshire and Maine, but it was a cold day and no one was fishing.

Ms. Rosenstein said that the majority of people interviewed were "catch and release" anglers, however, some do take fish of all sizes home. She indicated that people who are catching the stocked fish generally adhere to the size-limit requirements.

Mr. Kaltofen asked if they were taking home eels.

Ms. Rosenstein answered that no one admitted to eating eels and no one caught one this year.

Mr. Kaltofen asked if anyone had any further questions.

Mr. McHugh said the survey was still ongoing.

Dr. Vembu asked what the timeline was after the surveying concludes in late October.

Mr. McHugh said the results will not likely be available to discuss until the January 2006 RAB meeting.

Mr. Miller stated that he expected more eels would have been caught, and asked if the population was down for some reason.

Ms. Rosenstein said that there are no recent fish studies available for the fish population of Lake Cochituate, but the State does have a voluntary reporting of bass catches so they have an idea of

how many are caught each season.

Mr. Miller and Mr. Kaltofen both inquired about the number of eels caught during the ecological risk assessment.

Mr. Palaia answered that during the ecological risk assessment sampling program (about four years ago), quite a few eel were caught using electrofishing in shallow waters, and eels are bottom dwellers.

Mr. Miller stated that eels are quite prevalent in lake, and he understood that a significant number of Asian fishermen, particularly by the horseshoe dam (near Route 135 and Fisk Pond) were looking for them. He stated that eel are also a high risk fish, and he wondered whether we were getting honest answers from the survey interviewees.

Ms. Rosenstein said that we were also looking for individuals catching bullhead/catfish.

Performance Based Contracting Update, Soldier Systems Center

Mr. McHugh introduced Mr. James Connolly who would provide an update on the status of performance based contracting at SSC.

Mr. Connolly said that performance based contracting has been discussed a couple of times during the past year with the possibility of the Army issuing a performance based contract. He stated that a performance based contract (PBC) establishes specific goals for the contractor to meet, a specific schedule for meeting those goals, and insurance coverage to make sure that the selected contractor has resources to reach the goals.

Mr. Connolly said that in June 2004, prior to the site scoping visit, the U.S. Army Environmental Center (USAEC) evaluated individual sites at SSC to determine if any were suitable for this type of contract. A site scoping visit was conducted in June 2004. In October 2004, USAEC identified some sites that were suitable for this type of contract, including the three ground water sites: NRDEC-05 (T-25 Area), NRDEC-11 (Buildings 63, 2, and 45), and NRDEC-16 (Buildings 22 and 36).

Mr. Connolly stated that a scope of work was developed and issued to contractors to solicit bids for a PBC contract. The scope of work for the PBC includes:

- Continue operating the T-25 Area ground water treatment system
- Take over the quarterly ground water monitoring program
- Complete the investigation and feasibility study of sites NRDEC-16 and NRDEC-11, and implement the selected remedy on the two sites
- Conduct 5 year reviews, except for this year since it was decided that it would not be a good idea to bring in a new contractor at this time.

Mr. Connolly stated that the solicitation was issued, contractor proposals were submitted on July 1, 2005, and a contract was awarded on August 31, 2005. He stated that it is a 5-year contract with a 5-year option, for a total of 10 years.

Mr. Connolly stated that the other work being conducted on site outside the scope of the ground water PBC contract will continue on in the same way, and work under the new PBC contract will continue in the same way as it has been done, so the RAB should not notice any difference.

Dr. Vembu asked if the contract award was for all three sites, or if there were different contractors for the three sites.

Mr. Connolly responded that there was one contract which covers all three sites.

Mr. Connolly presented a slide which illustrated an organizational structure for the contract, and then introduced the project manager from ECC, Mr. Darren Gainer. He stated that Mr. Gainer will be the project manager, but there are also some other familiar names, such as Mactec, which is a subcontractor to ECC. He stated that Mactec has already been working on the remedial investigation and feasibility study for sites NRDEC-11 and NRDEC-16 and has done the ground water monitoring in the past. He stated that the contract is in place, and the transition between ICF (who is doing some of the work) and ECC is starting.

Dr. Vembu asked Mr. Gainer what his philosophy and thought process was on what is going to drive this project.

Mr. Gainer responded that he imagined that the RAB might have some concerns about this being a guaranteed fixed-price contract, in that it is not good that it's a closed end system so the RAB see's it as a contractor trying to do the least amount of work possible and collect the most money out of the contract. He stated that that is not our goal and it is not how ECC was selected. He stated that ECC had to compete this contract in a best value procurement, meaning that the Army does not just look at the bottom line price, but looks at what the capacity of the company is. In order for ECC to have a good presentation, it involves all previous work ECC has done at other DoD facilities. ECC is a small business, right on the cusp of the 500 person limit, and has over 100 people currently employed at the Otis Air Force Base doing remediation. ECC got high marks/blue ribbons from AFCEE on our project work there. The Natick site is not just a run and gun project for us – it is a site that we want to walk away from with high accolades from the entire group. Mr. Connolly's performance evaluation of our work is important, but also the EPA, the MADEP, and the community group. Everybody has to be in agreement that good work was done and the contract was successful in order for us to consider success overall.

Dr. Vembu asked if there would be a presentation to talk about the timeline.

Mr. Connolly responded that we are going to continue doing the same sort of thing as we've been doing, and rather than viewing this as one contract with a timeline, we will be having individual milestones that we will be briefing the RAB on as they come up. All work plans and deliverables will be presented to the Army, the regulators, and the RAB with the same opportunity to comment as you've always had. He stated that we are going to take one deliverable at a time and brief you as the work happens.

Mr. McHugh stated that the SSC acquisition office let this contract go and the contracting officer for this contract is here at SSC, which probably was not the case when USAEC originally briefed you.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked about the first 5-year review for the T-25 Area and why it is being kept outside the scope of this contract.

Mr. Connolly responded that it was kept outside of scope of this contract because it wasn't necessarily a good idea to bring in a new contractor who was unfamiliar with that part of the site. The subsequent 5-year reviews will be part of this contract, but not the one that will be starting in the next few months.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if ECC will be operating the treatment system at the time of the 5-year

review, and who is operating it now.

Mr. McHugh responded that ECC will be operating it, and that it is currently being transitioned to ECC from ICF.

Mr. Miller asked what additional capabilities ECC brings to the project.

Mr. Connolly responded that he felt that the RAB's questions will arise from review of the deliverables produced by ECC, and that he did not feel there is a positive or negative as far as ECC's capabilities or past performance that are going to drive any questions. He stated that ECC was evaluated against the competition.

Mr. Miller stated that if the ECC personnel do or do not bring any new skills of any particular type, he would like to know.

Mr. McHugh responded that they may bring new skills, but that remains to be seen.

Mr. Connolly responded that you will see that play out in the development of deliverables, and possibly coming up with new and different ways of doing things - but nothing comes to mind.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if ECC would be maintaining all the wells and doing all the monitoring.

Mr. Connolly responded that they would.

Mr. Kaltofen asked who would be reviewing ECC's contract performance.

Mr. Connolly responded that he would be.

Mr. McHugh stated that if you have any issues, you should still call Jim Connolly or myself.

Public Comments

Mr. Kaltofen asked if there were any other questions or comments.

Mr. Miller stated that he recently received an Environmental Report pamphlet, which discussed updating the community relations plan, and he wondered what the RAB member's participation would be in this and other community activities.

Mr. McHugh asked the RAB members if they have been contacted and interviewed recently as part of the community relations plan update.

Dr. Vembu said he was interviewed, but didn't know what the next step was going to be.

Mr. Kaltofen stated that he and Mr. Lubic were interviewed, which is how some of the selectmen became aware of it.

Mr. McHugh stated that the Army is updating the community relations plan, but he had not seen it yet.

Mr. Miller stated that previously the RAB had a more active level of community involvement, and he senses that it is much less now. He stated that somebody did call to interview him, but he didn't feel like he was involved in it or what the interview would result in.

Ms. Greendlinger asked Mr. Miller if he thought the updated community relations plan would prompt the discussion that he was aiming for, and how best to reinvigorate and get the project off the natural cycle in terms of public participation.

Mr. Miller responded that the new people in community might be very interested in the work at SSC, but don't know about it yet.

Mr. Connolly stated that the USAEC contractor that was doing the updated community relations plan provided SSC with a questionnaire that we tailored to make it more site specific. One of the questions asked something like - do you feel that there is anything else that needs to be done to get people involved. Mr. Connolly stated that he did have a discussion with the contractor and got a feeling that some people would like to be involved, but didn't know how to. He stated that some of the feedback from the Environmental Report newsletter reply cards is that the people would like more information. He stated that when the results from this survey are available and the postcards from interested individuals are in, we'll have more information.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked how many newsletters were sent out to the public.

Mr. McHugh responded that 1,076 newsletters were sent out.

Ms. Greendlinger asked what the timing of the survey results and the updated community relations plan was, because with a proposed plan that is currently being cued up, this would be an opportune time to have the results of the survey to try to incorporate the suggestions in time for the proposed plan so that the Army can maximize the public involvement in that.

Dr. Vembu and Mr. Fitzgerald inquired about whether the survey results could be discussed at a future RAB meeting.

Mr. Connolly and Mr. McHugh agreed that the results could be discussed, once they become available.

Mr. McHugh stated that he would find out when they would be available, at least as a draft, because it makes sense to incorporate as much as we can before going to a proposed plan in the spring.

Mr. Miller stated that he would like to suggest a more coordinated effort that involves the Army having a table at the annual "Natick Days" celebration. He stated that every fall Natick celebrates "Natick Days" on a Saturday, and it has a big turnout. He indicated that many people would be interested in what is going on at SSC and the importance of Natick's drinking water supply.

Mr. Miller stated that "Natick Days" is an annual forum for interest groups and non-profits to present what they are doing in Natick, and is specifically designed to see what's happening in town, including information about drinking water, schools, environment, etc.

Mr. McHugh stated that the Army could take a copy of tonight's minutes to the USAEC contractor and the USAEC could respond to them.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked how much feedback has been received from the newsletter reply cards.

Mr. Connolly responded that the Army has received about half a dozen of the feedback reply cards.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he thought the newsletter was kind of depressing, and that for new

people moving into the area, it looks pretty heavy duty. For example, the 180 million gallons of water pumped and treated - what does it mean.

Mr. Kaltofen stated that it would solve a problem for him if he could have the brochure as a pdf document. He stated that he gets calls and e-mails from people (some of which are about to close on a house in Natick) asking what's up with the Army labs, and a pdf of the newsletter would be something that he could send to them.

Ms. Williams said she also receives calls and after discussing the issue with the caller, she refers them to Mr. Connolly for more information.

Mr. Kaltofen asked if we could make it an official action item to get the newsletter in a pdf format.

Mr. McHugh responded that it could be.

Mr. Miller stated that instead of a pdf file which he feels are large and hard to use, an html web page link would be easier and that you can click and go.

Mr. Kaltofen responded that he feels the pdf is more universal.

Mr. McHugh stated that there should be another RAB meeting in November, and November 17th was set as the tentative date.

Mr. Kaltofen made a motion to adjourn, and the meeting adjourned at 8:12pm.

Action Items:

- 1.) Dr. Vembu and Mr. Fitzgerald inquired about whether the survey results could be discussed at a future RAB meeting.

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- 2.) Mr. McHugh stated that the Army could take a copy of tonight's minutes to the USAEC contractor.
- 3.) Mr. Kaltofen asked if we could make it an official action item to get the newsletter in a pdf format.

Mr. McHugh responded that it could be.