



U.S. AIR FORCE

**Former Pease Air Force Base
Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, 9 June 2021 – 4:00 p.m.
Via webinar only, no in-person meeting

Meeting Minutes

RAB Members Present: Andrea Amico (community member and co-chair), Mike Daly (appointed member: US EPA), Mike Donahue (community member), Val de la Fuente (appointed member: Air Force Civil Engineer Center, DoD Chair), Brian Goetz (appointed member: City of Portsmouth), Joan Hamblet (community member, NH state representative), Dennis Malloy (community member), Mark Mattson (community member), Mindi Messmer (community member), Peggy Lamson (community member), Jameson Paine (community member), Lulu Pickering (community member), Col. John Pogorek (appointed member: NHANG), Peter Sandin (appointed member: NHDES)

Meeting Support Staff Present: Hank Andolsek (Wood), Ona Ferguson (Consensus Building Institute, RAB Meeting Facilitator), Linda Geissinger (AFCEC Public Affairs), Dante Gulle, (AGEISS, Public Affairs Support), Cameron Hager (Consensus Building Institute Support), Amy Quintin (Wood), Rob Singer (Wood)

Others Present: Doris Brock, Scott Calkin, Matthew Casey (NHANG), Cliff Chase (Absolute Resource Associates), Peter Clark (Office of US Senator Jeanne Shaheen), Chris Cross (Newington Resident), Kelsey Dumville (US EPA), Frank Getchell (Weston & Sampson), Jon Green (Office of US Senator Jeanne Shaheen), Tim Green, C. Lee Major, Margaret McCarthy (Weston & Sampson), Robin Mongeon (NHDES), Albert Pratt (City of Portsmouth), Sam Quattrini (NHDES), Brandon Shaw (Wood), Jared Sheehan (PDA), Lauren Tierney (Wood), Justin Troiano (Office of Senator Hassan), Sharon Vriesenga (AFCEC)

Next meeting: September 14, 2021 – 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. via webinar, no in-person meeting.

Meeting Materials: Pease RAB meeting presentation slides are available at:
<https://www.afcec.af.mil/Home/BRAC/Pease-Archives/>

Video: The virtual meeting was recorded and posted to the City of Portsmouth YouTube page:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=neCA2xSXPfc&list=PLNWsoVwtYMQvuBBvoBKWTGoTjQzF7YHVb&index=1>

Welcome, Introductions, RAB Business – Ona Ferguson, Consensus Building Institute

- Cameron Hager of CBI reviewed Zoom technology.
- Ona Ferguson reviewed the agenda/scope of the meeting.
- Ona Ferguson introduced Val de la Fuente – acting BRAC program manager and acting RAB chair co-member.
- Ona Ferguson introduced the RAB members present.
- The summary of the March 2021 RAB meeting was approved.

General Updates + Remedial Investigation Update – Val de la Fuente, Air Force

- Val de la Fuente provided a general site update. Val has been assigned to Pease for over 10 years and is now filling the role of BEC since Roger Walton stepped down. The position will be permanently assigned to Christopher King in the coming months. The emphasis of the meeting is the Remedial Investigation (RI).
 - The Air Force is still operating the Site 8 Interim Mitigation System and have done some optimization work on the system.
 - The Air Force is still operating the Airfield Interim Mitigation System and over 400 million gallons have been treated.
 - The Air Force is still performing the public and private well monitoring program.
 - The Air Force recently awarded a new contract to Wood that will guarantee performance of the treatment plants and monitoring programs through February 2023.
 - Non PFAS sites continue to be executed under the BRAC Environmental Construction Optimization Services (BECOS) contract, particularly the Site 39 Soil Vapor Extraction system.
- Hank Andolsek of Wood reviewed the CERCLA process. For PFAS at Pease, a Preliminary Assessment (PA) and 3 Site Inspections (SI) have been completed and we are now in the RI stage, collecting data for an RI report. The RI Work Plan was finalized on 30 April 2021 and field work began on 03 May 2021. Initial sampling focused on soil sampling at known or suspected source areas.
- Completed activities include:
 - Existing groundwater monitoring well sampling (resampling of wells to verify the extent of the PFAS plume),
 - Open bedrock groundwater monitoring wells via packer sampling,
 - Brook surface water and sediment sampling,
 - Springs/seeps sampling along the western edge of the base boundary,
 - Runway soils sampling, and,
 - Offsite shallow groundwater and hydric soils sampling.
- Planned Activities include:
 - Former crash area surface soil sampling,
 - Monitoring well installation,
 - Existing monitoring well groundwater sampling (Zone 2, Landfill 5, Landfill 6)
 - Storm water reconnaissance and sampling,
 - Private property well sampling,
 - Lysimeter installation (sampling devices installed in soil above the water table looking at water leaching through the ground from precipitation and picking up PFAS contributions from soil). Construction of lysimeters and evaluation of source area soils data to recommend where lysimeters should be placed began last week.
- Hank Andolsek emphasized that the current Work Plan will not be the only work plan and that this is an iterative process that will include more work to be detailed in future Work Plans. Other planned Work Plans include the Screening Level Ecological Risk Assessment Work Plan and the Human Health Risk Assessment Work Plan, currently under regulatory review currently.
- Hank Andolsek reviewed the current timeline of the RI. Work started in May 2021 and will continue into Fall 2021. Some sampling may also take place in Spring 2022. The Draft RI report is scheduled for August 2022.
- Hank Andolsek presented an interactive map that included the RI Work Plan Section 5 figures as layers and accepted questions from RAB members:
 - Jameson Paine inquired if the RAB would have the opportunity to review future work plans before they were finalized. Amy Quintin of Wood replied that the Air Force typically does not share drafts until they are final.

- Jameson Paine asked about the reporting limits of the current RI sampling analyses. Amy Quintin replied that the laboratory limit can get below the New Hampshire State Ambient Groundwater Quality Standard (AGQS). The State standards are considered a potential Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirement (ARAR) so the AGQS is being met by the reporting limits.
- Mindi Messmer asked Hank to identify on the interactive map the location of some of the known and potential source areas.
- Andrea Amico asked if the proposed sampling locations would just be sampled once or if they would be sampled multiple times, perhaps seasonally. Hank Andolsek replied that the soil samples are one-time samples and the results will be used to drive potential future sampling in other locations. Groundwater samples at this time are only being collected once, as we are in an investigation stage at this time, not a monitoring stage yet. If a sample results comes back with unexpected results then we will consider if we need to resample that location. Once we have our arms around the problem and start monitoring, then repeated samples would be collected. For surface water, as part of this phase, we've gone back to several key locations from the ESI and resampled them to verify concentrations, in addition to sampling new locations.
- Joan Hamblet asked what the difference was between the crash stations and Site 8 and if Site 8 had the highest concentration. Hank Andolsek replied that the crash stations are fire stations and therefore known source areas because AFFF was used there. Site 8 was the fire training area where they practiced fire drills and used copious amounts of AFFF, one of the major sources of PFAS in soil and groundwater. There are currently five areas designated as known source areas – Site 8, the former crash fire area, the current crash fire area, the firing range, and the fire department equipment testing area.
- Amy Quintin of Wood presented the purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on ongoing and completed work, and to circle back on comments from the Community Question & Answer session that was held several weeks ago. An overview of when ARARs are considered during the CERCLA process was presented and a lawyer from the Air Force was in attendance to answer questions.
- Amy Quintin stated that the project is currently in the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) stage. The RI/FS are separate reports that will be written sequentially. The RI provides information and gatekeeping that brings a project into the FS stage. The step we're doing now is crucial to determining how the site will get remediated.
- The purpose of the RI is to characterize site conditions and determine the nature and extent of the waste. In the RI we assess the risk to human health and the environment. The RI is a risk-based process.
- The FS stage looks at all the different treatment possibilities, if options will achieve remediation goals or treat the extent that's necessary based on the findings from the RI. In the FS, the list of potential ARARs is pulled forward and evaluated to determine which laws are appropriate.
- Amy Quintin presented when ARARs are first seen in the CERCLA process:
 - The RI provides the initial summary of potential ARARs. At Pease we know that the NH AGQS are potential ARARs for groundwater, therefore they are considered at this phase. This RI report will have these potential ARARs documented.
 - The FS report, which is performed after the RI and Risk Assessment, is where the list of potential ARARs are pulled in. The ARARs and Risk Assessment are used to develop remedial action objectives (RAOs) for the project.
 - Once ARARs are written into the Record of Decision (ROD), they must be met; they are final and formal in the ROD.
- Amy Quintin gave a brief update on backyard produce sampling. The backyard produce sampling plan is still in development with the NH DES and EPA. Sampling locations are being determined based on community survey responses, including PFOS/PFOA/PFBs detected water that's being used to irrigate edible crops or water animals for consumption. In general, animals bioaccumulate more than plants.

We will evaluate what crops are in season and available to sample. We are scheduling backyard produce sampling for this summer. The project team has talked with the New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game about other seafood that might be caught for consumption in Little or Great Bay. Lobster was identified as a potentially relevant pathway and further evaluation is in discussion.

- Andrea Amico asked how Wood had identified the private gardens for sampling. Amy Quintin replied that these gardens are on properties that are part of the private drinking program and their wells are either sampled quarterly or annually. Some of the identified wells are not potable water but were identified in other surveys. In some cases, the data is quite old, from 2014 when we sampled non-potable wells, so we are resampling these places with old data in this round. We want to be able to use the most current data available. If data was inconsistent or older than a year, then we are resampling.
- Andrea Amico asked if there are opportunities for community input in the next phases and if there are plans for other biota to be sampled. Amy Quintin replied that the community has provided lots of input that is being digested. The evaluation of biota pathways and potential thresholds that would guide sampling are not part of the RI Work Plan. A brief biota approach pre-planning document was submitted to the DES and EPA for review separately so as not to hold up the rest of the RI work.
- Andrea Amico asked the Air Force Attorney if she could provide an update on the Air Force's position with respect to drinking water that exceeds the NH state MCLs. Sharon Vriesenga replied that the Air Force is only authorized to take action when drinking water exceeds the EPA lifetime Health Advisory, and she can't speak to potential future positions of the Air Force. In the RI process, the NH AGQS are considered a potential ARAR for groundwater.
- Mindi Messmer asked if samples would be collected in areas where bio-solids sludge had been spread in the past. Hank Andolsek replied that we are not at this time planning on sampling biosolids.
- Mike Donahue asked Amy Quintin how gardens would be selected for sampling. Amy Quintin replied that samples will be collected from gardens that have been identified as having wells/hydric soils/surface water with contamination.
- Peter Sandin commented on Mindi Messmer's question about biosolids and sludge, that samples are being collected from landfills and the Air Guard area. Additionally, we have looked at groundwater data in that area but found nothing to indicate a potential source.

Open Discussion

- Peggy Lamson asked why lobsters weren't looked at before and mentioned that the water in Little Bay may be too warm for lobstering. Amy Quintin replied that now we are in the RI stage, whereas before we were looking at IF there was a pathway in the SI. Lobsters are mobile so they aren't a good indicator. Bivalves like clams/mussels/oysters don't move, so if PFAS is detected in the streams coming out of Pease, you can make a solid determination. If Lobsters are contaminated, it's harder to determine if it's from Pease.
- Amy Quintin clarified that the Air Force has not determined at this time if they will or will not sample more shellfish as part of the RI.
- Andrea Amico provided the following announcements to the group: Russel Osgood just retired and his place on the RAB will need to be filled.
 - Ona Ferguson mentioned that the RAB doesn't have a precedent for replacing someone that steps down mid-year, and suggests the co-chairs present a process to the RAB.
 - Jamie Belanger relayed to Andrea Amico prior to this meeting that the timing of RAB meetings is very challenging and advocated for considering different meeting times to be more accessible.
 - When we met in person, it was 6:00pm-9:00pm, when we pivoted to an online forum RAB members said this was an okay time. Ona can reach out to members over the summer to determine best times moving forward.
 - Andrea Amico inquired about the accessibility around documents and asked about getting printed copies of some documents for the RAB.
 - Val de la Fuente replied that he will review Andrea's inquiry about printed copies of documents.

- Mindi Messmer said that she appreciates saving paper and she is okay to look things up online. Mindi Messmer asked about collecting surface water/sediment samples from Peverly Pond. Hank Andolsek presented a map of surface water/sediment and seep sampling locations to show coverage. The sampling plan in the RI will build on surface water/sediment samples from the ESI as well as fish & wildlife sampling in preparation for the removal of the Lower Peverly dam. Mindi Messmer asked if the fish & wildlife results could be provided. Peter Sandin replied that he will follow up and make sure the results get onto OneStop.

Drinking Water Update – Brian Goetz, City of Portsmouth

- Brian Goetz provided an update on drinking water related activities in Portsmouth:
 - Reviewed the area of the Tradeport and Newington town center that the Pease System supplies and reviewed the components of the Pease System – wells, booster pumps, cartridge filters, resin filters, GAC filters, and the distribution system.
 - Reviewed the timeline of construction progress with a photo slideshow.
 - Provided an update on the Haven well reactivation. The well was turned on and pumped to waste to test the performance. Results show Non-Detect (ND) for PFAS after treatment. The City then performed a 5-day pumping test through the AIMS system which ran 24-7. At the end of the pumping test, all drinking water parameters were sampled from the Haven well influent and all state standards except for PFAS were met.
 - Presented PFAS influent results from 2014 and 2021. All four NH AGQS PFAS compounds were much lower in 2021 than in 2014. The drop in concentration could be attributed to 2 years of the AIMS running. All data collected by the city will be submitted to the DES Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau. When it comes online, the Pease System will be sampled weekly for the first month, then monthly. All data will be shared once validated.
- Andrea Amico asked how many PFAS compounds the city was testing for. Brian Goetz replied that the City was using analytical method 533 with a list of 28 compounds.
- Andrea Amico asked why the testing frequency would change to monthly. Brian Goetz replied that it was the consensus of the technical team. If a trend is observed that indicates samples should be collected more often then they will, but they are confident in their approach right now.
- Joan Hamblet asked if the results could be published in the newspaper. Brian Goetz replied that results will be validated then put up on City website. Joan Hamblet replied that the public would be excited to see concrete Haven well results.

Public Comments

- No request for public comment

Meeting Recap and Next Steps – Ona Ferguson

- Ona Ferguson gave the RAB members an opportunity for a final thought and asked for meeting topics to be shared with her before the September meeting.
- Val de la Fuente shared that next meeting he will clarify more on the biota, do a better job explaining what thresholds mean, provide more on garden testing and wet soils. The work we have planned right now is just the next phase and there will be a tremendous amount of data generated for this report.
- Mike Daly congratulated the City on the great work done with the treatment plant.
- Peter Sandin thanked all for their patience and input and mentioned the great City data.
- Colonel Pogorek shared that the results from Pease Cancer Study have been finalized and will be presented by the School of Air Force Medicine on 22 June. The results and report are available online and he can distribute.
- Brian Goetz thanked all.

- Lulu Pickering said that she has seen Wood people all over Newington and hopes there will be preliminary date to review during the September meeting, hopefully in-person and for longer than two hours.
- Peggy Lamson thanked Wood and concurred that Zoom is difficult.
- Mindi Messmer thanked all and mentioned that the technical sessions were very fruitful. She remains concerned about some issues touched on during the meeting including shellfish sampling and asked the Air Force to carefully consider taking a more precautionary approach to the limited number of regulated compounds.
- Mark Mattson inquired about the availability of final reports regarding the RI/FS and suggested they be put in libraries.
- Dennis Malloy joined the meeting during Brian Goetz's presentation.
- Joan Hamblet thanked Brian Goetz for the good news.
- Mike Donahue agreed to want to have the September RAB in-person and linked the absence of public comments to the timing of the meeting.
- Andrea Amico said there were many things to be celebrated tonight including samples being collected and the water treatment going well, but there is still lots more to do around accessibility of reports and work plans. Andrea Amico expressed that the public should be allowed to review draft documents and requested more transparency and the ability for the community to actively engage.
- Ona Ferguson thanked all and adjourned the meeting.

Adjourn