



Pease Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Meeting

Tuesday, April 9, 2024 – 4:30-8:00 p.m.

In person meeting with virtual option

Meeting Summary

Meeting in Brief

This RAB meeting started with an in-person tour and visit to the Site 8 Treatment Facility. The meeting followed immediately after in Newington. The meeting had virtual and in-person options, with most RAB members and members of the public attending in-person. Twenty RAB members, including those representing the EPA and Air Force, attended in person. The video presentations and slide set were shared with members in advance. Following a viewing of the recorded presentations, Dr. Andrea Tokranov from the US Geological Survey made a presentation about PFAS in New Hampshire soils. The RAB received updates about the Interim Technical Information Report (ITIR) and the Pease Five-Year Review process. RAB community members presented ongoing work and had an open discussion with the technical team. There was a brief presentation on water treatment progress from the City of Portsmouth and the meeting closed with a public comment period. The next RAB meeting will be in a workshop format and is tentatively scheduled for 6 August 2024.

This summary was produced by the facilitation team from the Consensus Building Institute. Meeting participants are listed at the bottom of this document.

Meeting materials: Presentation slides and meeting materials can be found at:

<https://www.afcec.af.mil/Home/BRAC/Pease-Archives/>

Video: Recordings of RAB meetings can be found at <https://youtu.be/LwLz6BhgepA>

PFAS in NH Soils and Eastern US Groundwater

Dr. Andrea Tokranov, US Geological Survey, spoke to the RAB about research the USGS has conducted on the presence and distribution of PFAS in soils across New Hampshire. The study was conducted to support the development of soil remediation standards. The study focused on lands outside of known contaminated areas and found PFAS in every sample taken. There was no obvious pattern in concentration in soils across the state. The team found that New Hampshire has substantially higher PFAS concentrations in soil compared to Maine and Vermont. Dr. Tokranov also spoke briefly about a study of PFAS in groundwater in the Eastern US that has led to development of a model that could predict PFAS levels. Work on a scalable approach to building a predictive model is ongoing.

RAB members asked questions about the study methods, sources of PFAS in NH, and how these levels compare to other parts of the country and sought details of chemical characteristics of PFAS that affect its transportation and absorption.

Air Force Updates

Sand Filtration Pilot Study

In a pre-recorded presentation, Chris King, Air Force, and Jack Besse, WSP, provided an update on the Site 8 Treatment Facility pilot study, and the Interim Mitigation System (IMS). The change to using single-use resin has been successful. The removal of resin regeneration and distillation equipment has created space to install more pre-treatment systems. The team is currently running an 8-week pilot study of gravity sand filtration at Site 8, to test if it can help improve system efficiency, capacity, and reliability.

Monitoring Well Installation

Lindsay Papa, WSP, discussed the work plan and process of installing 23 new monitoring wells at the site. Drilling boreholes and installation of overburdened or fractured bedrock wells took place between November 2023 – January 2024. Deep bedrock wells will be installed and sampled in fall 2024, with ongoing site restoration as required thereafter.

Data Sharing Update

Following the November 2023 RAB meeting, The Air Force has requested private well owners sign new agreements consenting to sharing data from their well. 15 well owners have responded to date, and all have provided consent.

Interim Remedial Actions

Chris King, Air Force, provided responses to commonly asked questions about interim remedial actions. He noted that interim status is a CERCLA term that refers to interim actions taken to reduce imminent risk to human health or the environment. Interim remedies may be a part of the final remedy for the site, which will be recorded in a record of decision. No additional interim remedies are planned for Pease at this time.

Guide to the ITIR

Haley Plante, WSP, spoke to the RAB about the forthcoming Informal Technical Information Report (ITIR). The report will provide a summary of remedial investigation activities undertaken from November 2020 – June 2023. RAB members received a brief guide on how to navigate the report to find specific kinds of data.

Discussion

- Members asked about the timeline for the report's release. Chris King replied that there is currently no specific timeline for its release. Once available, the RAB will plan a workshop to review it in detail.
- Chris noted that data identifying the location of private wells will be redacted in the ITIR, although data collected from those wells will appear in aggregate.

- Recent consent from property owners will not impact this report, and their data will only appear unredacted in future reports.
- Some RAB members expressed concern about this, and stated that not including the location of these wells serves to raise more questions than offer answers.

Pease Five-Year Review Updates

Debra MacDonald, Environmental Chemical Corporation (ECC), talked about the Pease Five-Year Review process. ECC has worked with the Air Force since September 2020 and is currently preparing the Sixth CERCLA Five-Year Review Report (FYR). FYRs are implemented after a remedy is put in place to track its effectiveness and include interviews with members of the public who are familiar with the clean-up program.

For the Pease RAB FYR, ECC has interviewed two RAB members. Any community member who is interested in being interviewed as part of this process can reach out to Chris King at the Air Force. It was clarified that Site 39 will be included in the FYR.

Municipal Water Update

Al Pratt, City of Portsmouth, provided an update on municipal drinking water. The Grafton Drive Water Treatment Facility treats about 15 million gallons of water per month from three supply wells in Pease. The facility is performing well. There has been no reported presence of regulated PFAS compounds in treated water. There is a very low-level detected presence of two short chain compounds, at concentrations of 6-11 parts per trillion. It is now ten years since PFAS was first detected at the Haven well. Early data from that time showed 1400-2500 parts per trillion. The most recent data shows 197 parts per trillion — a significant reduction that shows the efficacy of the treatment systems in use.

Filtration media is performing well and working as designed. Used media is shipped to a hazardous waste landfill in Idaho, as there is a ban on incinerating PFAS. Currently the Air force is not exploring other destruction technologies, as there are concerns about impacts on environmental justice communities.

RAB Community Concerns

Andrea Amico, RAB Community Co-Chair, delivered updates to the RAB:

Community Letter Reactions

- The RAB sent a community letter to the Air Force, NHDES and EPA on October 16, 2023. A response was received on February 16, 2024.
- The RAB also sent an email on November 1, 2023, requesting that chicken egg owners be contacted with screening level information. A response was received on February 14, 2024.
- Community members were disappointed by the responses, which lacked specific timelines and were largely non-committal. There was no acknowledgement of the

request for a webinar, which they will undertake with the support of Skeo. They appreciate that current screening levels will be implemented in the work ahead.

- They raised concerns about data gaps regarding shellfish and finfish and would like to explore this further when the ITIR is reviewed. There were also concerns about the use of Preliminary Remediation Goals (PRGs).
- The response about egg screening was disappointing to the community, despite the availability of contextual information from the NHDES.
- Overall, responses to the community in the past 2-3 years have become boilerplate. Community members would like to see more focus on Pease, timeliness in responses, and transparency.
- Chris King thanked the community members for raising these concerns. He noted the feedback and will communicate it to leadership in the Air Force. The ITIR discussion will include time to discuss data gaps.
- He expressed appreciation for the efforts of the community in Newington and noted that data sharing restrictions have posed real challenges.

Other Updates

- Next steps with TASC and Skeo teams:
 - Review the ITIR when available, participate in a technical workshop with the Air Force, and review the latest PFAS filtration and remediation technology to compare to methods in use at Site 8.
 - Review the Pease Five Year Review when available, and work on a community involvement plan.
- The Air Force was unable to send letters from the RAB requesting property access agreements from owners of private wells. The Air Force will continue to follow up directly with each property owner. The Select Board independently reached out to all private well owners on record. The RAB will be kept updated on this topic.
- Updates were shared about foam sampling in the region and NHDES meetings about PFAS research.

Public Comments

There were no public comments at this meeting.

Final Thoughts

- There was a request that AFFF releases and monitoring be a future RAB meeting topic.
- Following the ITIR release, a community workshop session will be planned around the document.
- Michael Donahue acknowledged Air Force efforts at the Site 8 Treatment Facility.
- The RAB appreciated Russell McCann, who recently stepped down from the RAB.

Meeting Attendees

RAB Members Present: Andrea Amico (community member and co-chair), Sam Beam (community member), Robert Blonigen (appointed member: Town of Newington), Bradford Connolly (community member), Mike Daly (appointed member: US EPA), Michael Donahue (community member), Keith

Girouard (appointed member: NH Air National Guard), Huddy Grandy (community member), Ben Johnson (community member), Christopher King (appointed member: Air Force Civil Engineer Center, DoD Chair), Rosalie Lopresto (community member), Mary Marshall (community member), Mark Mattson (community member), Paul Roy (community member), Peter Sandin (appointed member: NHDES), and Jared Sheehan (appointed member: Pease Development Authority).

Meeting Support Staff Present: Toby Berkman (Consensus Building Institute, RAB Meeting Facilitator), Aarati Halbe (Consensus Building Institute Support), Lindsey Papa (WSP), Haley Plante (WSP), Amy Quintin (WSP).

Others Present: Val de la Fuente (US Air Force), Karmen King (Skeo), Claire Marcussen (Skeo), Hagai Nassau (Skeo).

Appendix A: Meeting recording times

Link to technical recorded presentation: [DVIDS - Video - Pease RAB planning session - March 2024 \(dvidshub.net\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwLz6BhgepA)

Link to the meeting recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwLz6BhgepA>

Recording timestamps are listed parenthetically next to the associated topics that were discussed.

Summary

4:45 **Arrival at Site 8**

People attending the Site 8 tour were welcomed to arrive and spend some time visiting.

5:00 **Site 8 Treatment Facility Visit – Air Force**

The Air Force and Air Force contractor (WSP) led tours of the Site 8 Treatment Facility and shared information on the sand filtration pre-treatment pilot study.

5:30 **Travel to Newington Town Hall**

In person attendees traveled from Site 8 to Newington Town Hall. There were displays of relevant graphics and figures at the Newington Town Hall available for viewing and discussion.

5:45 **Tech Check**

Anyone who attended virtually was welcomed to join the webinar early to check their video and audio.

6:02 **Technical Recorded Presentation – Air Force and WSP**

Air Force and Air Force contractor (WSP) provided an update on the Site 8 treatment facility pilot study and an overview of the timeline of monitoring well installation.

6:16 **Welcome, Introductions, RAB Business – Consensus Building Institute (CBI)**

- CBI facilitator introductions (0:00)
- Reviewed the meeting procedures and technology supporting this hybrid meeting (1:04)
- Reviewed the meeting agenda (3:30)
- New members were welcomed and introduced (4:50)
- Existing members and others attending the meeting were introduced (7:24)
- Approved November 2023 meeting summary (11:30)

6:29 **PFAS in NH Soils and Eastern U.S. Groundwater – USGS, Dr. Tokranov**

- Introduced the work, including the purpose and context of the study (12:11)
- Outlined the study design and goals (15:32)
- Discussed the results of the study (18:55)
- Summarized the study and provided links to other related studies (27:20)
- Provided overview of the USGS study on PFAS in groundwater in the Eastern U.S. (28:55)
- Questions (34:20)
 - Comparison of study results to other regions of the country (34:28)
 - Origins of widespread PFAS contamination in New Hampshire (35:26)
 - Transport of longer PFAS chain lengths in the environment (36:45)

- PFAS in soil to shallow groundwater leaching and PFAS in groundwater supplies (39:10)
- Methods of PFAS bonding to organic compounds in shallow soil (42:19)
- Sampling design decisions (43:41)
- NH study in comparison to other studies of PFAS in soil in New England (46:18)
- Tridium relationship to PFAS in the study (47:56)

7:05 Air Force Update

- The Air Force shared an update on the progress of data sharing permissions from private drinking water well owners (48:44)
- The Air Force responded to questions received by the RAB in an email in February (50:04)
 - Clarified of the use of the term “interim” for CERCLA investigation and remediation actions (50:23)
 - Discussed the next phase of the CERCLA process (51:37)
 - Outlined the order of events of the site clean-up efforts under the CERCLA process (54:04)
 - Questions
 - Clarification around February DoD announcement referencing interim cleanup remedies at Pease (54:46)
 - Clarification around regulatory involvement in record of decision for remedial action (55:44)
 - Discussion around community input in the final remedy decision (56:47)

7:16 Guide to the ITIR - WSP

- WSP introduced the purpose, content, and layout of the ITIR (59:58)
- Provided an overview of how to navigate the ITIR document (1:03:43)

7:24 5-Year Review update – USEPA and ECC

- ECC introduced themselves and their work at Pease (1:08:11)
- Discussed the CERCLA process, as well as the purpose and steps of the 5-year review (1:11:07)
- Provided examples of questions included in the 5-year review interview process and displayed a figure showing the sites included in the most recent review (1:16:22)

7:36 Community Questions

- The Air Force and USEPA clarified how community members can request to participate in the 5-year review process (1:19:42)
- The Air Force discussed the schedule for the ITIR finalization (1:22:37)
- The Air Force provided clarification around data sharing and redaction of figures for the ITIR report (1:23:38)
- The Air Force clarified that Site 39 is included in the 5-year review (1:25:13)

7:44 Brief Update on Drinking Water – City of Portsmouth

- Al Pratt (City of Portsmouth) provided an update on the Pease drinking water facility (1:28:32)
- Discussed the off-site waste disposal of resin and spent carbon (1:31:54)
- Discussed waste destruction technologies (1:32:51)

7:50 RAB Community Concerns – Andrea Amico

- Andrea Amico (Community Co-Chair) reviewed letters sent by the RAB to the Air Force and RAB community reactions to Air Force responses (1:34:35)
- Peter Sandin (NHDES) discussed data sharing (1:41:34)
- Andrea Amico provided links to the recordings of two NHDES meetings hosted in Newington in February 2024 (1:43:43)
- Andrea Amico presented the proposed next steps for RAB work with SKEO (1:44:19)
- Andrea Amico discussed RAB access agreement letter to private well owners in Newington (1:46:09)
- RAB requested that AFFF releases and monitoring be a future RAB meeting topic (1:48:18)
- Andrea Amico provided update on April 2023 foam sampling (1:49:32)
- Michael Donahue acknowledged Air Force efforts at the Site 8 Treatment Facility (1:52:33)

8:12 Meeting Recap and Next Steps – Consensus Building Institute

- Summarized RAB requests and next steps (1:55:39)
 - ITIR release and community workshop session around the document
 - Request for AF to share update on data sharing letter mailing efforts
 - Future RAB topic around AFFF releases and monitoring

8:13 Adjourn