

**VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE  
INSTALLATION RESTORATION PROGRAM  
COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
20 FEBRUARY 2003**

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Ms. Bea Kephart called the Vandenberg Air Force Base (AFB) Community Advisory Board (CAB) meeting to order at 1000 hours. Ms. Kephart welcomed the CAB members and introduced Col LeClere, 30 MSG/CC, who co-chaired the meeting in the absence of Col Louis.

Ms. Kephart outlined the meeting's agenda:

- Installation Restoration Program Status;
- Snowy Plover Plan;
- Sites 8, 9, and 10 Update;
- Community Involvement Plan (CIP) Update and Internet Initiative;
- CAB Charter Review and Member Policy; and
- Member Comments.

*Installation Restoration Program Status*

Ms. Kephart reported that Vandenberg AFB received funding authorization for fiscal year 2003 (FY03). IRP staff is currently working with the Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence (AFCEE) to award contracts for FY03 projects. Projects include:

- Follow-on remedial action construction at Site 1, AAFES gas station;
- Feasibility studies at Sites 3, 5, 13, 21, 24, and 29;
- Remedial investigations at Sites 24, 25, and 45;
- Continued work on areas of concern;
- Remedial action at Site 45 (basewide underground storage tank sites); and
- Basewide groundwater monitoring program.

Concerning Ecological Risk Assessments, Ms. Kephart reported that the peer review panel finalized the disputed toxicity reference values (TRVs) in November 2002. The Department of Toxic Substances Control and IRP staff finalized remaining TRVs in December 2002 based on peer review panel recommendations. Tetra Tech is now able to complete ecological risk assessments for all sites basewide using the new TRVs. The first report will be completed in April, and others will follow approximately every 4 to 6 weeks until all are accomplished.

*Snowy Plover Plan*

Ms. Nancy Read Francine, Wildlife Biologist, briefed the CAB on beach access and the western snowy plover recovery plan at Vandenberg AFB. The western snowy plover is a small ground-nesting shorebird that was listed as “threatened” in 1993 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Vandenberg AFB has the largest snowy plover population under a single federal land manager. Because of this, snowy plover recovery is the USFWS’s number one priority. In 2000, Vandenberg AFB negotiated with USFWS to secure the opening of 0.5 mile of Surf Beach. Signs were erected and security forces patrolled the areas. The results of the restricted beach access caused the plover population to increase from 78 (in 1999) to 105 (in 2000). Although the plover population increased, the violation rate was extremely high. Therefore, in 2001, Vandenberg AFB hired five civil service beach patrol persons and erected snow fencing to delineate closed areas. As a result, the plover population increased once again from 105 (in 2000) to 122 (in 2001). In 2002, Vandenberg AFB hired beach patrol personnel—two civil service ticket writers, and two summer hires to reduce the violation rate from the year before. Public media such as additional signage and educational kiosks were posted along beaches. The end result of these efforts was that snowy plover populations nearly doubled from 122 (in 2001) to 201 (in 2002).

The 2003 plover nesting season plan includes (1) developing a plan prior to the 1 March beginning of the nesting season, (2) setting the violation quota at Surf Beach at 50 (up from 40 in 2002), (3) providing shelters for enforcement personnel, and (4) installing a remote surveillance system for closed beach hours. Areas of limited access will include 1.25 miles of Vandenberg AFB beaches—0.5 miles at Surf Beach (general public access), 0.25 mile at Wall Beach (base access), and 0.50 mile at Minuteman Beach (base access). Beaches will be open Friday through Monday from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Looking ahead, Vandenberg AFB is committing resources for public access by allocating over \$200K for contracted/civilian docent support to keep the beaches open four days during the week (peak hours). Five shelters for enforcement personnel will be purchased, as well as repairs and replacement of the chain link fence and portions of the snow fence will be repaired or replaced with chain link fence. Plans are being made to also install a surveillance system to enhance after hours enforcement. Other actions being taken in 2003 to avoid violations include support for the community docent program. The next docent training date is 20 February 2003. The base will be engaged in actively educating the community as well as promoting public awareness of the beach rules.

The long-term Vandenberg Specific Recovery Plan will be developed after publication of the USFWS Snowy Plover Recovery Plan. The current management approach is to effectively balance recreational beach use and western snowy plover recovery, while maintaining full mission capability at Vandenberg AFB.

#### *Sites 8, 9, and 10 Update*

Ms. Amena Atta, IRP Project Manager, briefed the CAB on IRP Sites 8, 9, and 10. This site cluster is an active rocket launch facility known as Space Launch Complex No. 4 (SLC-4) located on South Vandenberg approximately 3,000 feet from the ocean. This area contains sensitive cultural and biological resources. Between 1964 and 1967, Atlas/Agna launches took place at SLC-4. After 1971, the site was used for Titan launches. During these years, a chlorinated solvent known as trichloroethylene (TCE) was used to clean rocket motors prior to each launch. TCE (a liquid solvent and probable human carcinogen) was conveyed to the concrete retention basin with the deluge water during a launch. TCE leaked through the cracks in the retention basin and migrated downward about 115 feet to the groundwater. The direction of the groundwater flow is from SLC-4 to the coast where it emanates from coastal springs in the cliffs above the ocean. TCE concentrations in the groundwater exceed California drinking water standards and warrant the remedial action.

During the remediation of these sites, Vandenberg AFB has identified four objectives: (1) reduce the mass of TCE contamination in the groundwater, (2) control migration of the groundwater contaminant plume, (3) minimize the impacts to sensitive habitats in the Site 9 area, and (4) reduce the release of TCE contaminated groundwater from the coastal springs.

The groundwater in the SLC-4 area flows away from Spring Canyon and toward the ocean in three directions: west, northwest, and north. A horizontal well has been installed on Surf Road, and 23 additional extraction wells have been drilled to help mitigate contamination. Ms. Atta showed the CAB members several maps depicting location and installation of the horizontal and extraction wells.

Next, Ms. Atta explained the soil and groundwater remediation system. The TCE mass will be reduced by extracting contaminated soil vapor and groundwater from the 23 wells that have been installed adjacent to the launch gantry. The migration of the TCE plume will be controlled by pumping groundwater from a horizontal well that has been installed downgradient of the launch gantry. Contaminated soil vapors and groundwater will be piped to a treatment system that will use granular activated carbon to remove the TCE. Clean water will be piped to infiltration borings and discharged below the ground surface. Clean vapor will be discharged into the atmosphere.

The work and design plan for this remediation were approved by regulatory agencies on 30 December 2002. Construction of the treatment system is underway, and is scheduled for completion in April 2003, pending any delays due to launch activities.

#### *Community Involvement Plan Update*

Mr. Ron MacLelland, Community Relations, updated the CAB on the status of the Community Involvement Plan (CIP). As of December 2002, the CIP has been completed and distributed. Additionally, the CIP has been uploaded onto the Vandenberg AFB Internet website. As requested by community members, IRP information and community meetings have also been posted on the website. Business cards with the website address were distributed to each member in attendance. The IRP website address is <http://www.vandenberg.af.mil/30sw/organizations/30msg/CES/IRP>.

#### *CAB Charter Review and Member Policy*

Dr. Linda Fargo briefed the CAB about participation in the document review subcommittee. The document review subcommittee's primary purpose is to review technical documents. However, at this time, Dr. Fargo suggests reviewing the Vandenberg AFB CAB Charter. The date of the last updated charter was 31 October 1996. Discussions at earlier CAB meetings have been made about honorary membership or student membership and voting. The current membership policy states that only adults have voting privileges. Dr. Fargo would like to solicit comments from the CAB members about these issues as well as other membership venues. A brief meeting was called following the regularly scheduled CAB meeting for members to meet and discuss ideas and review plans.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm. The next quarterly CAB meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, 5 June 2003.