



# Environmental Restoration News

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## RAB Update

Since public interest in the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meetings has dwindled, it was decided that the RAB would meet twice a year instead of quarterly. It was also decided that the meeting format would be expanded to include all postwide environmental issues instead of limiting the meetings to only restoration issues.

The next RAB meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 16, 2002, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Noel Wien Library. In addition to the restoration topics usually covered at RAB meetings, a presentation will be made on Fort Wainwright's Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan (INRMP) and other upcoming environmental impact issues on Fort Wainwright.

### ACRONYMS

#### DRMO

Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office

#### FAA

Federal Aviation Administration

#### INRMP

Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan

#### RAB

Restoration Advisory Board

### IN THIS ISSUE

RAB Update	1
FAA Tower at the DRMO Yard	1
Operable Unit Updates	2
Transferring Army Property	4
What We Do Between RAB Meetings	5
Preliminary Closeout Reports	6

## FAA Tower at the DRMO Yard

The Army has been coordinating with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for construction of a new tower to be built this summer across Channel B from the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office (DRMO) Yard. Coordination has taken place to ensure that the FAA knows the status of the nearby "No Further Action" N-4 Site, as well as the new tower's proximity to the DRMO Yard. Historical maps discovered during this preconstruction phase show a former fuel facility may have existed where the FAA plans to construct the tower. Close coordination between the U.S. Army and the FAA will take place in the event any contamination is found. The Army will drill soil borings and collect soil samples this summer (2002) in conjunction with the sampling at the DRMO yard to determine if any further investigation in this area is necessary.

**TO CONTACT US: If you have questions about the environmental program at Fort Wainwright or would like to become a member of the Restoration Advisory Board, please contact:**

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# Operable Unit Updates

## Operable Unit 1

A draft work plan for moving the phytoremediation soils to the Fort Wainwright landfill is scheduled for completion in early summer 2002. Upon approval of the work plan by the Alaska Department of Conservation (ADEC), the soil will be moved from its current location across the street from the landfill to a specially designed cell at the Fort Wainwright landfill. The soil is expected to be moved this summer. The Army anticipates that the soils will be moved during the summer of 2002, pending approval by ADEC.

Samples were collected from two groundwater monitoring wells at the 801 Drum Burial Site on April 10, 2002. This is part of the long-term groundwater monitoring that occurs at this site. Results of the monitoring will be reported in the next quarterly newsletter.

## Operable Unit 2

One of the wells at the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office (DRMO) Yard could not be sampled in December 2001 due to recharge problems. A new well has been installed near this well in the south side of the DRMO Yard to characterize the groundwater. The groundwater concern at this site consists of a trichloroethylene (TCE) plume that extends beneath the site. An air sparge/soil vapor extraction (AS/SVE) system was installed at the DRMO Yard to address this contamination. The AS portion of the cleanup system has been operating during the winter months; however, the SVE portion of the system has not operated during the winter due to concerns about the system freezing.

The groundwater monitoring wells located in the DRMO Yard will be sampled before the SVE system is turned on in an effort to determine whether the system is feasible to operate.

Building 1168 will be sampled during the upcoming summer field season. Four groundwater monitoring

wells at this site will be sampled for petroleum content. More details about this sampling will be reported in future editions of this newsletter.

## Operable Unit 3

An aquifer pump test will be conducted in June on Birch Hill. The purpose of the test is to better understand the underground properties of the groundwater aquifer that exists in this area. This information will be helpful to the Army to design and plan for the cleanup in that area.

The aquifer pump test will use 12 existing groundwater wells to gather the information. The test will be conducted in a phased approach and will be coordinated with the operation of the product recovery system. The total duration of the project is expected to last about 3 weeks.

The product recovery system on Birch Hill continues to operate. It is producing approximately 10 gallons of product per day. This product is stored in a 3,000-gallon holding tank. When the tank is nearing capacity, an on-post hazardous waste contractor picks up the product for proper disposal.

Permafrost modeling in the Birch Hill area will continue in order to help delineate subsurface conditions. The Army is adding information to the model, including what the site looked like 30, 40, and 50 years ago. This information will give the Army a better idea of existing permafrost before the development occurred, where the groundwater flowed before development, and how current conditions differ from previous conditions. *(cont. on p. 3)*

### ACRONYMS

**ADEC**

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

**AS/SVE**

Air sparge/Soil vapor extraction

**DRMO**

Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office

**TCE**

Trichloroethylene

# Operable Unit Updates

The Remedial Project Managers for the Army, the ADEC, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be meeting in April to finalize the Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD).

Results from samples collected from the soil pile at Milepost 3.0 indicate that most of the petroleum contamination is below the maximum contaminant levels (MCLs); however, a few “hot spots,” or discrete areas where contamination was detected, were above MCLs. The treatment system in this area, an air sparge/soil vapor extraction (AS/SVE) system, will continue to operate this field season with a focus on the “hot spot” areas. The AS/SVE treatment system currently in use at the Milepost 2.7 soil pile will continue to operate as well.

Contaminant levels at this soil pile have not yet met cleanup goals, but levels of petroleum continue to decrease. The Army is evaluating the installation of new wells at Mileposts 2.7 and 3.0 once the soil piles have reached their cleanup goals and have been removed, in order to ensure that the full extent of contamination has been defined and addressed.

The Army, with concurrence from the ADEC and the EPA, decided to remove all off-gas/oxidizer treatment systems associated with the air emissions from the SVE treatment systems at the Railcar Off-Loading Facility (ROLF). The decision was made because contaminant levels in air had decreased to the point that the price and usage of propane was no longer cost-effective. The off-gas/oxidizer treatment system will remain in place at the ROLF in case contaminant levels increase. If levels increase, the off-gas/oxidizer treatment system will be reinitiated.

Groundwater treatment using an SVE system at the ROLF has been successful. Groundwater samples collected from the majority of the area indicate that contaminant levels are below MCLs. The SVE system in these areas will no longer be in operation; however, in areas where the contamination detected is above MCLs, the SVE system will continue to be in operation.

## Operable Unit 4

The Army is required to sample groundwater associated with the Fort Wainwright landfill twice per year. The most recent sampling event occurred in the fall of 2001. While results indicate that contaminants above cleanup levels are present, the sampling event did not show a significant increase in contaminant concentrations when compared to previous sampling events. Monitoring will continue with the next scheduled sampling in the spring of 2002.

The Remedial Project Managers (RPMs) will be meeting to decide whether to reinitiate the treatment system in place at the Coal Storage Yard. The decision will be based on groundwater sample results collected in fall 2001 and spring 2002. Whether the treatment system is turned on or not, the Army will continue to monitor the groundwater at the site.

## Operable Unit 5

The Chena River Aquatic Assessment program work plan will be finalized in May 2002. The work outlined in the plan is scheduled to occur in June 2002 when the Chena River has reached optimum levels. Surface water samples will be collected from the Chena River in the “boomed” area adjacent to the Operable Unit 5 West Quartermaster’s Fueling System (WQFS). *(cont. on p. 4)*

### ACRONYMS

**ADEC**

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

**AS/SVE**

Air sparge/soil vapor extraction

**EPA**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

**ESD**

Explanation of Significant Differences

**MCL**

Maximum contaminant level

**ROLF**

Railcar Off-Loading Facility

**RPM**

Remedial Project Manager

**SVE**

Soil vapor extraction

**WQFS**

West Quartermaster’s Fueling System

## Operable Unit Updates

*(continued from p. 3)*

An adsorbent boom will be placed in this area after the river water melts sometime in the spring of 2002. The treatment systems in the WQFS and East Quartermaster's Fueling System (EQFS) are monitored monthly to ensure proper operation.

### ACRONYMS

**ADEC**

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

**EPA**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

**EQFS**

East Quartermaster's Fueling System

**NPL**

National Priorities List

**WQFS**

West Quartermaster's Fueling System

This winter problems were noted in one of the treatment areas (i.e., source areas) associated with a blower and with an oxidizer. It was determined that the blower system was affected by freezing cold temperatures. The oxidizer was "plugged up," thus causing the system to shut down. The oxidizer problem has been fixed, and the system is now fully operational.

It appears that repair on all oxidizers will be required on a

regular basis. The heat coming through apparently wears away the insulation, causing flaking on the catalyst. When the catalyst becomes plugged, the entire system shuts down as a safety precaution. The Army is reviewing alternatives to solve this problem.

## Two-Party Agreement Sites Update

There are 14 Two-Party sites on Fort Wainwright. These sites are being addressed through a separate State of Alaska "Two Party Agreement" because the only contaminant of concern at these sites is petroleum, which is not monitored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The 14 sites are part of the Army's agreement with the State due to the presence of former leaking underground storage tanks.

This summer the Army plans to review the status of each of the Two-Party sites for sampling and operational requirements. One of the challenges will be developing a way to handle sites with persistent diesel range organics contamination (a type of petroleum contamination), which can be detected in samples above the State of Alaska cleanup levels. The Army will work closely with ADEC to develop a plan to address these sites.

## Transferring Army Property

Sometimes the Army receives inquiries as to whether portions of land it occupies can be transferred, or purchased, by other parties. For example, a couple of years ago, 3 acres of Fort Wainwright were reassigned to the Fairbanks North Star Borough for a solid waste transfer station. This land was not a contaminated site.

With the closure of installations and a greater demand for land use, the Army often receives requests for the transfer of contaminated sites as well.

Prior to any transfer, an investigation has to occur to determine whether any hazardous substances, petroleum products, or petroleum-product derivatives were released or disposed of on the property. Also, for National Priorities List (NPL) sites, such as Fort Wainwright, the EPA has to concur with the conclusion of the investigation and approve the property transfer.

As with most environmental issues, the bottom line is that there is "no threat to human health or the environment." NPL-listed "sites," or areas with treatment or monitoring, generally do not meet the criteria and would therefore not be available for transfer out of Army jurisdiction. However, exceptions have been known to occur; no hard and fast rule applies to every site.

## What We Do Between RAB Meetings

**W**hen I last wrote, we were preparing to update our Installation Action Plans (IAPs) and the Defense Sites Environmental Restoration Tracking System (DSERTS). I am happy and thankful to report they are both FINISHED! The IAPs have been forwarded to the Army Environmental Center (AEC) for signature. Once we have received AEC signature, copies will be made and distributed to all interested Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) members.

Most of the work for DSERTS included updating risk data using the latest status reports received for each site. Updating this information into the DSERTS database may change the risk level because as levels of contamination remaining at a site decrease, the risk level should decrease as well. Although none of the sites at Fort Wainwright showed a marked decrease from the last year's DSERTS update, the data show that contaminant levels at sites in the restoration program are decreasing postwide.

This is the time of year that we begin reviewing work plans and preparing for the upcoming field season. Some of the work that we are planning to do is discussed in the Operable Unit Update section of this newsletter.

I hope to see all the RAB members and certainly welcome any interested members of the public to the next public meeting scheduled for July 16, 2002, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Noel Wien Library.



# Preliminary Closeout Report

Fort Wainwright has reached another significant milestone in environmental cleanup with the completion of all construction activities associated with the planned Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liabilities Act (CERCLA) treatment systems on post.

This milestone, known as “construction complete,” is achieved when all physical construction of the treatment or monitoring systems is done, pre-final inspections have been conducted, and the treatment systems are operational and functional.

In order to document this nationally recognized milestone, the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in cooperation with the Army, is completing a Preliminary Closeout Report, or PCOR, for Fort Wainwright. This report documents that all major construction activities are completed for the site consistent with the Records of Decision. The PCOR includes information on the status of each treatment system in the five operable units, construction costs, and anticipated future operation and maintenance costs, as well as identifies any remaining tasks or reports that will need to be completed.

## ACRONYMS

### CERLA

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

### EPA

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

### PCOR

Preliminary Closeout Report

### RAB

Restoration Advisory Board

## NEXT RAB MEETING

The next Fort Wainwright RAB meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 16, 2002, at the Noel Wien Library.

The meeting is open to the public and is scheduled from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. If you have any questions, please contact Therese Deardorff at (907) 384-2716.



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