

Meeting Notes: Community Advisory Group - Aerojet Superfund Issues, July 15, 2003

1. Attendees

Frank McCarthy (Co-chair, CORPAC and Gold River liaison), Janis Heple, Charles Berrey (USEPA, Aerojet RPM), Paul Schubert (Southern California Water Service), Vicki Lee (Sierra Club), Larry Ladd, Michael Girard (Aerojet), Tim Murphy (GenCorp), Alex MacDonald (Regional Water Quality Control Board), Tricia Carter (Recorder, CH2M HILL), Don Hodge (EPA), Herb Niederberger (Sacramento County), Andrea Mayer (GC Wallace), Russ Davis (Elliot Homes), Theresa McGarry, Heather Zepf, Deane Burk, Leo Winternitz (Water Forum), John Barris, Amy Hiramoto, Conrade Mayer, Richard Hildebrand

2. Update on the Enforcement Order

Charles Berrey provided an update from the July meeting on the status of the enforcement order from EPA to Aerojet regarding the replacement water supplies. Charles referred to the first line item dated 07/29/03 and noted that the remedial design will go forward for Areas 1, 2 and, 3 and the installation of extraction wells C1, C9-2, and C7, respectively. Wells C9-1 through C9-4 will have well head treatment systems. Charles referred to a map showing the three areas and noted that there are 17 extraction wells associated with Areas 1, 2, and 3.

Charles pointed out the line item dated 09/08/2003; the EPA requested four additional wells to be installed in OU3. Charles referred to a map showing the location of the initial wells (defined by a polygon), the proposed multi-completion wells (defined by a triangle), and the installed multi-completion wells (defined by a shaded triangle). Paul Schubert asked about the status of the proposed multi-completion wells (P4, P5, and P6). Charles stated that it has been a challenge obtaining permits for the installation of these wells because these wells have been sited in County park land, which is within a fee area. Agreements are needed for these wells. These wells need to be installed at this location because they will be downgradient of the plume.

Data for existing wells was summarized in a table. Charles noted that the sampling results for the majority of the wells indicate that the contamination is defined in the deeper aquifer layers, that is, the highest concentrations are found in layer D for the new monitoring well clusters, P1, and P2 and in layer E for well P3. The source of the contamination is from the burial pits in Buffalo Creek.

In regards to other environmental related efforts, Charles pointed out that the County and Aerojet signed a settlement agreement with respect to groundwater related issues within eastern Sacramento County. Aerojet will give its remediated water and existing water rights with the City of Folsom to the County and pay the County \$12.5 million. The County will come up with a plan as to how the water is distributed. Charles noted that EPA is concerned that this agreement will not provide for a replacement water supply in time for the next summer.

The CAG was also informed that a draft Remedial Investigation report for OU5 (Perimeter Groundwater Operable Unit) was due on 9/15/03. A draft risk assessment and draft feasibility study is due in December. The CAG was asked if they would like a third-party, technical review. The CAG responded that they would like a technical review.

Other significant items prior to the next CAG meeting were addressed by the group. One item in particular was discussed: Agencies respond to Aerojet's position that it is not responsible for contamination in Southern California Water Service well #3 and #4 and California-American's Malaga well. Aerojet states that the contamination is from fertilizer and agricultural practices.

Mike Girard added that the detections are atypical (i.e. the levels have not changed over 5 to 6 years). The wells where trace levels of perchlorate have been detected are far west of the Aerojet plume and

the contamination is shallow contrary to the Aerojet plume which goes deeper as it migrates. Aerojet believes the cause of this contamination is due to fertilizer; however, the EPA does not agree fertilizer is the source.

Larry Ladd noted that personnel from Mather say that perchlorate was found in the Rockingham area. Charles confirmed this and stated that trace levels of perchlorate were detected and the Air Force is sampling for it. This information will be passed on to the EPA once results come back. This contamination is potentially from the Inactive Rancho Cordova Test Sight (IRCTS). Charles stated that if OU3 is contributing to the source of the IRCSTS plume, these results would be included in the design. The EPA is coordinating with the Air Force and with Aerojet on this issue of perchlorate.

3. Latest Monitoring Results

Alex MacDonald noted that most of the monitoring results have been summarized in the previous discussion. Alex stated that perchlorate and TCE have been detected at the IRCSTS. The plumes have migrated off the IRCSTS and into an area slated for development. The Water Board and DTSC want to complete the investigation of this area before houses are developed, and the Boeing Company is currently negotiating with the property owners. Ideally, extraction wells will be in place by next summer. The developers will be obtaining the water supply for the development from the North Vineyards area. Elliot Homes is looking to supply some irrigation water for the Village of Zinfandel project with a water supply well on their property. If needed, the well will be provided with treatment for removal of perchlorate.

Alex stated that Aerojet has had 2,600 acres carved out from their Superfund Site. The 2,600 acres was used as buffer land for their rocket testing and manufacturing facilities and is mostly open space. Now this open space will have a development built on it. Tim Murphy stated that there are land use controls for environmentally sensitive groups in the carve out lands. Janis Heple stated that the development land for Elliott Homes was also carried out under DTSC order. Janis also asked if there were any restrictions on IRCSTS land. Alex replied that there are none; however, there are easements for Aerojet and Boeing so that they can put in pipelines and extraction wells for the treatment systems. Theresa McGarry asked how drinking water is monitored. Alex replied that the Water Board requires Aerojet to have a water supply well monitoring plan. Under that plan, wells are monitored on a monthly or quarterly basis depending upon past results and location of the well with respect to contamination. If there is a verified detection of a specific pollutant, then the sampling frequency is increased from quarterly to monthly.

4. Multi-Stakeholder Water Reuse Process and the Water Reuse Plan.

Mike Girard stated that as a result of remediation efforts, Boeing and Aerojet produce water that is discharged into surface water as part of the conditions of their permits. The Water Board asked Aerojet and Boeing to look into the impact and reuse of the water in the basin. The impacts of this continuous extracting of water and recharging of the basin is being evaluated in the reuse plan. The purpose of the reuse plan is to determine a beneficial reuse of the water that is being extracted, treated, and discharged. Many alternatives were evaluated and the ultimate goal of the plan is to come up with recommendations for the reuse of the water. Mike explained that the County will now take the lead (as the owner of the water) to determine the best beneficial reuse. Herb Niederberger stated that the County will take the list of alternatives to prepare CEQA documents. Don expressed his concern that the public was not asked for their input and that by the time the CEQA process is complete, many of the alternatives would be eliminated. Herb noted that the Environmental Impact Report will go out for public review. Mike stated that the development of the reuse plan was more of a broad approach and not a staged approach. Many parties were involved to develop these alternatives (i.e. water purveyors, water forum, Aerojet and Boeing, etc.) all of which represent the public. Herb noted that this plan is still in its infancy and that objectives will be developed and alternatives ranked.

Herb stated that this water will be generated 24 hours a day, seven days a week and that some of the alternatives will fall out because they cannot take on this amount of supply. Deane Burk asked if the water could be reinjected. Mike answered that this would not be advantageous because it could increase the impact on the community.

5. Rio Del Oro Development.

Russ Davis and Andrea Mayer presented on the Rio Del Oro development. Russ is providing services for the planning and environmental documentation for the development of Elliott Homes. Of the 3,800 acres that were carved out in 1997 and 1998, Elliott Homes received 1,100 acres from Aerojet. Elliott Homes purpose is to plan all 3800 former MDC acres with one comprehensive plan, Rio del Oro Master Planned Community. Formerly dredged by Natomas Land Company (northern two thirds); southern third is vernal pools and wetlands. 500 acres in southern third will be left undisturbed and other wetlands will be constructed as mitigation; the developer is currently working on the Clean Water Act section 404 permit with EPA.

The planned development uses a “smart suburb” plan that includes Bus Rapid Transit, light rail, biking, walking, and mixed-use development including office with upstairs residential, local retail, and light industrial under the Mather approach path. Village cores with village greens will provide community character, similar to Villages at Zinfandel with some higher density. The County is now considering inclusionary zoning and higher-density housing could be low-income but may not necessarily be. Jaeger Blvd.’s center lane will be dedicated for BRT connecting to light rail. The plan includes 6 or 7 elementary schools and a combination middle/high school. Elliot has already moved the high school to the center of the plan at the school district’s request, to move the school up in the process due to need to accommodate students. Surface drainage will also provide green belts and connect to the vernal pool area. Open space areas will include bike paths and wide drainage buffer on either side of low-flow channel, revegetated with native trees and plants (more varied than current cottonwoods). Plan also responds to noise and navigation constraints imposed by Mather.

Don asked if the drainage plan would allow storm flows to percolate back to groundwater. Russ replied that a master drainage study has been performed; the design calls for a detention basin to collect and slow storm flows before they run off into Morrison Creek and Folsom South Canal. The Aerojet/County agreement will provide for drinking water supply; and the County will handle the AB610 drinking water supply certification. The project will also use purple-pipe non-potable water for landscaping.

Vicky noted that the light industrial and retail jobs would pay too little for the workers to afford the housing likely to be built, so jobs/housing won’t be balanced and project will generate commute trips.

The following web sites provide information on environmentally preferable techniques for managing stormwater, wastewater, and traffic circulation in new developments:

Low Impact Development resources (EPA):

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/lid/>

Department of Housing and Urban Development, "The Practice of Low Impact Development":

<http://www.huduser.org/publications/destech/lowImpactDevl.html>

Maryland non-profit, the Low Impact Development Center:

<http://www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/>

Private-sector consultants on conservation development:

www.appliedeco.com

6. Next Meeting.

November 18, 2003, Rancho Cordova Neighborhood Center – 10665 Coloma (at MacGregor),
Community Room A.