

## **Camp Bonneville Citizens Advisory Group**

Meeting #5 – **DRAFT** Summary

6-8 p.m. Wednesday, February 20, 2008

Fire Station 88, 6701 NE 147th Ave.

### **Group Members:**

George Brerton  
Don Chapman  
Bob Dingethal  
David Hurt  
Gary Johnson  
Nathan Reynolds  
Pam Rigby  
Bud VanCleve  
Don Wastler  
Jan Wojciechowski

### **Members Absent:**

Dennis Benson  
Rand Harris

### **Staff Members:**

Jerry Barnett  
Ben Forson  
Mike Gage  
Greg Johnson  
Jim Gladson  
Jeroen Kok  
Jeanne Lawson  
Kalin Schmoltd

### **Others:**

Lacy Gage  
Julie Wilson  
John Oxford  
David Ohmsted  
Chuck Mason

### **Purpose of Meeting:**

- Discuss current cleanup efforts and findings
- Receive background on types of MEC (Munitions of Explosive Concern)
- Receive overview of process to update and adjust reuse plan

### **Welcome & Committee Business**

**Agenda Review** – Jeanne explained that the team will continue to present information about the cleanup process. Greg will provide a briefing on the MEC items being discovered and Mike will discuss recent events onsite. There will be an overview of adjustments to the reuse plan resulting from the findings. Information will also be presented regarding the National Cemetery.

Bob Dingethal introduced himself. He will replace Debbie Abraham and represents Vancouver Parks and Recreation. Other committee members introduced themselves and their roles in the process.

**11/14/07 Meeting summary** - There were no comments.

### **Overall Status and Findings of Cleanup**

Ben described how the site has been divided into Remedial Action Units (RAUs) to simplify cleanup. RAU 1 includes 20 small areas with identified contamination and was completed by the Army. Ecology has issued a determination of no further action for RAU 1. RAU 2A includes 21 small arms ranges. Areas for soil removal have been identified in the Cleanup Action Plan and will occur in late May or early June. RAU 2B

includes demolition areas 2 and 3 and has been investigated for subsurface contamination. RAU 2B appears clear and Ecology is in the process of issuing a determination of no further action. RAU 2C, the landfill 4/demolition area 1, continues to be a source of groundwater contamination and there are still wide swings in contamination levels recorded by monitoring wells located up-gradient from the site. Ben reminded the group that the wide swings are likely due to groundwater elevation and displayed a chart illustrating how the concentration varies with groundwater levels. Ben conjectured that the contamination swings are due to a “bathtub” effect by the subsurface clay. As the water level rises, contaminants are diluted. When the water level goes down, less freshwater enters the wells and yields a truer concentration.

Don Wastler asked about testing downstream creek water for contamination. Ben said that the creek water was tested in 2001 and 2002 and nothing was found. He explained that they did not expect to find any contamination as the amount of contaminated water being discharged is small compared to the volume of water in the creek.

Ben said that RAU 3 includes site wide munitions. Ben said that surface clearance is complete, barring areas that are currently underwater or inaccessible at this time. Clearance of the valley floor has begun and is anticipated complete by the end of summer. The Draft Cleanup Action Plan is anticipated by the end of the year.

Ben explained that there have been a number of major findings that are contrary to the conclusions of the Army prior to the site transfer. Consequently, decisions based on the findings of the Army will need to be modified based on the new information available. Ben noted a variety of examples where the findings were in conflict with the Army’s information. A 2.36 range was discovered on the Central Valley Floor (CVF) when initial reports said there would be nothing there. Additionally, an area has been discovered that is thought to be a rocket burning and detonation area. The presence of rockets raises questions about perchlorate contamination. The lower DNR property was initially not considered for cleanup, however munitions debris and a frag field have since been discovered during road clearance. A 37mm range, a frag field, and an additional 2.36 range have also been discovered in the CVF in areas where there was not supposed to be anything. Demolition Area 1 was estimated to be approximately 500 feet in diameter, although that area now appears to extend beyond 1,000 feet. In the CVF there have been numerous anomalies detected by the shonstat (magnetometer) indicating concentrations of subsurface debris in certain areas.

Nathan asked about Ecology’s response and whether Ecology and BCRRT will seek additional cleanup funding from the Army. Ben noted that BCRRT is handling the cleanup and Ecology would support them if they present a case for increase funding.

George said he was glad of the findings. Jeanne agreed that the findings appeared quite thorough. She noted the importance of transparency throughout the process and encouraged the CAG to let the team know if something doesn’t look transparent. Greg complimented the BCRRT team for their hard work.

## **MEC Background**

Greg reminded the group of the role of the three-member Anomaly Selection Board (ASB) which makes recommendations based on the site findings. The ASB has almost 250 items to review at their next meeting.

Greg highlighted recent findings. The most common items being discovered are 2.36 bazooka rounds and stokes mortars. He explained that there is no way to tell whether a 2.36 round is a practice round until after it has been destroyed. Only one live round has been discovered so far. Stokes mortars were used during trench warfare in WWI. Mortars must also be destroyed in place. Mortars are being discovered throughout the site. Mike said about 100 mortars and 100 2.36 rounds have been found.

One 155mm round was found and detonated. 155mm frag has also been found. Frag from approximately ten explosive 105mm rounds have been discovered along with three smoke rounds.

Riot control smoke grenades were discovered in December. Frag from 40mm rifle grenades and 105mm rounds have been found 1,200 feet from the impact area. Greg reiterated that the Central Impact Target Area (CITA) will grow as a result of the new findings and the initial size was probably half of what it should have been.

Hand-launched slap flares have also been found throughout the site. The flares are dangerous because of their incendiary components. Small arms, including inert anti-tank mines have been found in a variety of areas. An additional disposal pit for rifle grenades has also been discovered in the CVF and will require excavation. Greg noted that training rounds end up hurting more people than live rounds.

Greg noted a 37mm range that has been discovered. The rounds are particularly dangerous because live rounds contain TNT and target practice rounds contain black powder. The rounds have been found in unexpected areas and as subsurface anomalies. The extent of the range will be investigated and incorporated into the Cleanup Action Plan.

David asked whether grenades have been found. Greg said that fragments and fuses have been found, though no live grenades have been found.

Chuck Mason asked whether there were significant findings in the area being considered for the cemetery. Greg said there were not.

Nathan asked whether there was further consideration of using an x-ray device to allow on site examinations. Mike said that a decision was made to detonate potentially dangerous objects instead.

Jeanne noted that during the cleanup process the CAG has been providing advice and communication with the community while ensuring transparency during the transition

into the reuse phase. She noted that it would be important to remain flexible with the schedule in response to the new findings.

### **Report on Cleanup Activities**

Mike noted that the soil sediment sampling report has been sent to Ecology. The report indicates no findings thus far but anticipates new areas to test.

Logs have been placed on some access roads to discourage trespassers.

Mike illustrated the different levels of brush clearance. He acknowledged the disruption of the environment but reiterated the need. He explained that vegetation under 4 inches in diameter is chipped and shredded. As part of this process, ditches and water ways are being cleared and culverts are being repaired as needed.

Mike noted a new demolition area for 5 inch rockets. A civilian pipe bomb was also found on the site and the police were summoned to destroy it.

Mike noted that the terrain and weather have made some areas too dangerous to work in at this time and/or working in some wet areas would adversely affect the environment. Mike noted that there had been a trip and fall accident resulting in a one broken leg.

Mike showed a map that indicated the locations of munitions debris and overlapping areas of MEC. One area that was intended for tent camping has since revealed itself to be a 37mm and Stokes Mortar impact area. Two additional impact areas for 2.36 rounds have also been discovered. Mike reiterated that the most indiscriminately fired munition was the three inch stokes mortar which has been found over a broad area. However he attempted to put this into perspective by indicating that all 100 mortars found thus far have been determined by experts to be sand filled training rounds and no mortars have been found with intact fuses or undetonated spotting charges. Of the 103 2.36" rockets found to date one has been determined to be a high explosive round with the others training rounds. The Army estimates one live round to every 100 training rounds fired. So far that ratio has held true, though energetic compounds might still be present in the training rounds. The Stokes mortars and the 2.36" rounds cannot be determined to be either live or training rounds without demolition, and the 2.36' training round might have unexpended rocket fuel that could be dangerous. Mike said that the good news about the 2.36" rockets was that they were predominately located in three distinct impact areas for relatively easy cleanup.

Bud observed that the brush clearance appeared to serve as neglected forest management. Mike said that the clearance was probably more aggressive than normal forest management warranted, but necessary, although the area will be seeded with rye grass and the understory will return relatively quickly.

George asked about the percentage of dangerous ordinance that has been discovered outside of the anticipated areas. Mike showed a map of an Army survey with 12,000 waypoints which revealed only one finding. He reiterated that the recent findings

emphasize how the Parson's study failed to disclose as much site information as it would have been helpful to disclose. Greg emphasized that all of the findings are considered dangerous. Mike offered to try and quantify the unexpected findings.

Mike explained that there are several categories of funding. 1) Waste that could have been "reasonably anticipated" based on the information provided to BCRRT prior to transfer remains the responsibility of BCRRT 2) New types of unknown waste are covered by the Army's responsibility for "unknown conditions" among their retained conditions. Activities and areas that were previously undisclosed – such as the 37mm range/impact area and the need to expand the CITA – Mike considered examples of unknown conditions and felt these areas would revert to the army in terms of funding. Meetings with the Army could take several months to years, though BCRRT believes that they have a solid basis for revisiting funding.

Nathan asked about the cleanup process while funding is being negotiated. Mike said that the cleanup will proceed and gathered data will go into a Cleanup Action Plan. It will be eight months to a year until enough data is gathered to finalize a Cleanup Action Plan and determine the most likely full cost of the project. An initial meeting has been held with the Army and they will likely be attending the formal monthly meetings in the future, and gathering additional information themselves.

Nathan noted that the RAB members had initially felt that Army hadn't characterized the site well enough and doubted that BCRRT would be able to conduct the cleanup for the quoted price. He said he was glad the material is being found and demonstrates an effective job. Don said it showed the effectiveness of the site transfer. Mike said he was happy to work with the involved parties and ensure a safe site and he believed that the best way to cleanup the site was to begin the cleanup, not just conduct additional studies to determine what the cleanup should become. He felt they were doing that right now and it was the most cost effective manner to conduct the characterization and cleanup.

### **Reuse Plan Update**

Jeroen noted that the process was focused on the cleanup effort and learning about the site. What is learned will impact what the reuse plan is like and how the plan changes in the future. The reuse plan was developed in 1997 and was intended to serve as a flexible blueprint for the cleanup and actions taking place onsite. BCRRT and regulators will work together to determine the adjustments over time. Once the reuse plan is set, further planning will proceed. Cleanup levels and areas deemed not suitable for reuse will be identified. A determination will be made regarding the proposed uses and potential safety issues. Considerations will have to be made regarding which uses can be shifted effectively and where they should go. Site constraints such as wetlands and riparian areas will also be identified. Costs, permitting, and public review will be considered. Though a number of questions remain unanswered and no timeline is currently set for the process, the area is still set to become a regional park.

Nathan asked about GIS data sharing between BCRRT and the County. Jeroen said that the findings will be tied into the County GIS system.

### **Veterans' Cemetery Update**

Jerry asked Chuck Mason to provide an update on the veterans' cemetery location. Chuck noted the support from the board of Commissioners for the cemetery. He noted concerns that the new munitions findings might make new uses difficult. There is interest in using a general area within the northwest quadrant of the site for the national cemetery. Mike indicated that he had not been privy to the discussion thus far. Chuck had several other questions which Jeanne suggested he bring up outside the committee. Jerry explained that a cemetery use appeared to be a more real opportunity at this time as funding appears to be approachable and cleanup to the extent necessary for gravesites appears more realistic.

Chuck noted that a man named Monroe, responsible for site acquisition for the National Cemetery Association, has visited the site twice and has a strong interest. Jerry noted that conversations with the Army have revealed that the use of the site for a cemetery is not considered a "reasonable" use under the conservation conveyance contract and could pose a legal roadblock. Chuck reiterated the political support for the effort. Jerry said that the two efforts would be coordinated as the cleanup proceeds.

### **Public Comment**

*Question* – A question was raised about the possibility of selling timber from the site and whether anything was being found that would make the trees unfit for sale. Mike said that there are areas where timber would have to be screened, although there is not likely to be any logging for some time considering the current market for timber. Don said that that he was currently addressing erosion control issues with the County and it is likely that they will be taking greater care with timber management in the future. Any logging is likely to be for maintenance or fire prevention at this point. Jerry agreed that the idea for selling the timber had been largely ruled out.

*Question* – It was noted that \$27 million had been allocated by the Army for the cleanup. A question was raised regarding how much has been spent so far. Mike said that 30-35% had been spent and the cleanup efforts were 30-35% complete (based on the original site expectations.) A question was raised about where the public can get more information. Mike noted that the County, Ecology, and BCRRT websites were sources for monthly reports and the presentations made to the CAG. A document repository is also available at the Vancouver library.

### **Next Steps**

Jim noted the draft FAQ that was derived largely based on input from the CAG. The FAQ will be used on the project website and Ecology and BCRRT are being encouraged to use it as well. Jim reminded the CAG that the mailing had been deferred and will be sent out in 4-5 weeks to the 6,000 people on the mailing list. The website provides a space for the public to sign up. Jim said he would send out copies of the FAQ by email and welcomed comments by Friday.

Jeanne noted that one of the responsibilities of the CAG is to provide a report to the board of commissioners. She suggested that members of the CAG could work with staff to draft a list of key messages to provide to the board at an April work session. Jeanne noted that a statement could probably be drafted based on a few phone conversations and the knowledge from the past five meetings. Jim said that it would be good for the board to hear from the CAG in addition to BCRRT. Jeanne suggested that the group send out thoughts via email that a small group could use to draft a document for approval by the full committee. Jim noted that there is no specific deadline and the report could also be issued in May. Jim offered to capture the potential approaches in an email and poll the group. David asked who would present the report. Jim said that it would be the CAG's decision and could be provided as an FYI document or it could be presented as a report by the CAG.

Nathan asked about the information feeding the cemetery action. Greg said he was asked to provide an estimate of the best location and cost. Based on what's being done and construction support, Greg estimated about \$10,000 per acre for UXO support based on 2 feet of disturbance and adding fill. Construction support would be necessary for digging graves. Greg noted that these were intended as very rough estimates.

**- Next meeting: June 11, 2008**

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