
SUBJECT GW/VZ INTEGRATION PROJECT OPEN MEETING - DECEMBER 21, 1998

TO Distribution

FROM Michael J. Graham, GW/VZ Project Manager

DATE December 9, 1998

ATTENDEES
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NEXT GW/VZ INTEGRATION PROJECT OPEN MEETING:

**NOTE: The Project Meeting scheduled for January 4 has been moved to January 11 in response to stakeholder concerns about holiday schedules.

Date: January 11, 1998

Location: Bechtel Hanford, Inc., Assembly Room (Badging Required)

Local Call-In Number: (509) 376-7411

Toll Free Call-In Number: (800) 664-0771

MEETING MINUTES:

A Groundwater/Vadose Zone (GW/VZ) Integration Project Open Meeting was held on December 21, 1998 in Richland, Washington at the Bechtel Hanford, Inc. Assembly Room.

PROJECT REPORT:

UPDATE ON MONIZ/DOE-HQ MEETINGS (Jim Poppiti):

Last week, the GW/VZ Integration Project gave presentations to Jim Owendoff and Ernest Moniz at Department of Energy Headquarters (DOE-HQ) in Washington, DC. Overall, it went very well. Dr. Moniz was very happy with the framework as it was presented to him. Mike Graham and Terri Stewart did an outstanding job of presenting the information. We went through the Long Range Plan (LRP) and the Science and Technology (S&T) Plan. Dr. Moniz asked a lot of questions pertaining to the overall Project. He is comfortable with the overall planning and now wants to see the follow through.

TWRS VZ TPA NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE (Ecology/DOE):

(Jim Poppiti – DOE-RL) I was out of town part of last week, but I'll update things as far as I know. The Tank Waste Remediation Systems (TWRS) Vadose Zone (VZ) Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) Negotiations pretty much concluded on December 11 on the technical issues. One major issue remaining was the applicability of the Model Toxic Control Act (MTCA). The DOE and Ecology attorneys have to get together to work out some of the language on that. As part of that issue, DOE-RL had to file a "Revised Statement of Dispute." I assume that has happened. Let's go forward with that assumption. If it was filed,

then there are 21 days before it goes to the Interagency Management Integration System (IAMIT). During the 21 days, hopefully, the DOE attorneys and the Ecology attorneys can resolve the issues and we can work together to keep this from escalating.

Another issue was finding additional resources for the TWRS VZ Project. I think I know where the funds can come from, but it will require help from Ecology to balance work in tank characterization with the TWRS VZ work.

(Stan Leja – Ecology) My viewpoint is essentially the same. The new deadline is January 8. The IAMIT can extend the deadline past that if they decide there is sufficient cause. I think the IAMIT meets next on the January 15. If the deadline is not extended, then Ecology has 14 days to respond. The MTCA issue is what took things back into dispute. I'm not sure what exactly the problems with the language are, but I believe it has something to do with the "substantive requirements of MTCA" wording. Plus, of course, there's the long-standing funding problem.

RESPONSE: On the MTCA thing, the attorneys have to define applicability. They need to define what is meant by a "substantive requirement" of MTCA. As for the funding, that just requires some internal redirection of funds, but there needs to be some help from Ecology. There is some low priority work in tank characterization that DOE has committed to that can be postponed or done away with entirely. Hopefully, agreement between Ecology and DOE-RL isn't too far off.

QUESTION: Does anyone know what the specific issues are with MTCA.

ANSWER: The language now says that DOE-RL will meet the "substantive requirements" of the MTCA. The problem comes from definition. An example is that one possible interpretation can be a requirement to meet residential cleanup standards.

POLICY WORK GROUP UPDATE (Dru Butler):

The Policy Work Group met for an hour and a half today. We revisited the three issues brought to us from the System Assessment Capability (SAC) Work Group. We simply reconfirmed that the decisions stated in the response papers were acceptable. We then spent some time talking about our last big open issue, the issue of regulatory pathway/framework. We talked about near-term examination of certain core project programs, like 200 Area integration under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). We agreed that the Policy Work Group would expand its scope a bit and take on the regulatory pathway/framework issue. We need to get a commitment for a more active involvement from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to effectively work the regulator issues. If we can do that, and continue to have the same level of involvement from Ecology, then I think we can tackle this with some credibility.

Also, due to a number of people taking time off for the holiday, we've decided to cancel the January 4 Policy Work Group meeting.

RESPONSE: When we made the decision to break into the sub-groups a couple of months ago, it was a good idea. It seems to have worked out great, and there has been a lot of progress made. I (Mike Hughes) like the idea of the Policy Team expanding and taking on the regulatory framework/decision process issue instead of forming another sub-team, if there are no objections. It keeps us from having five or six teams working at the same time.

PROJECT SPECIFICATION UPDATE (Tom Wintczak):

Draft C of the Project Specification (Spec) was shipped to DOE-HQ on December 17. We are in the process of making copies for public distribution. There should be a few copies of the Project Spec available this week, but because of the holiday they will not be in the mail until the 29th. There is also backup data from the Environmental Restoration (ER) Project, TWRS, and others. Most of it is provided for cost baseline purposes. It's not something that we are going to issue because it's just backup and reference material. Plus it's over 1200 pages. We are having a few copies made, but it won't be distributed in general. If you wish to get a copy of it, you can contact Karen Strickland at (509) 372-9236.

After the Project Spec is rolled out on the 29th, we will begin a two-month public review period. During that time, we have regional workshops planned to go over the document and to hear concerns and feedback. There are four workshops planned in the mid to late February timeframe. The comment period currently extends until March 12. It's possible that we might extend the review period in order to accommodate people attending the workshops. This is a draft document, and we want and need your comments.

In the near-term, there are no more Long Range Plan (LRP)/Strategy Work Group meetings planned. We need to transition into how to move forward on decision making and regulatory framework. We have the mission and the vision, and now we need to take a step back and see where we are.

QUESTION: Is the LRP Work Group over now?

ANSWER: At this point, yes. It should transition into something similar to what Dru Butler was talking about. Regulatory drivers will be major contributors to what our strategy will become.

SYSTEM ASSESSMENT CAPABILITY WORK GROUP UPDATE (Tony Knepp):

The SAC Work Group is done with what they originally set out to do. Our goal was to get through the Columbia River Comprehensive Impact Assessment (CRCIA) requirements and define them. We feel that goal has been accomplished. We're going to redefine the SAC Group as it exists now, reevaluate where we are, and decide what's next. We're going to look at CRCIA and the SAC and decide what exactly it is that we're going to build. We have to define the 17 candidate data sets, and then extract 17 study sets from those. The study sets are a more focused version of the candidate sets. It's what we want to look at in the next couple of years. We need to decide what we want to accomplish in this next phase. We're going to go into a 30-day think mode and decide how to go forward. The original purpose of the SAC Work Group was defining the CRCIA requirements, and we're done there. The SAC Work Group will be redefined after the first of the year. We'll publish what we decided about the CRCIA requirements for the world to see in the near future.

QUESTION: Does trimming the candidate sets down to the study sets require a new work group, or is it a matter of a few experienced people sitting down and hammering it out?

ANSWER: It will be a matter of a few experienced people sitting down and doing it. We're kicking around how to get to the study sets. The important thing right now is defining the purpose of the initial assessment. What's the purpose of the first model? What do we want to get out of it in the next two years, and what will it be used for? We don't want to have to change course in mid-stream and come up with a new study set every time somebody comes up with a new purpose. We want to be certain of our focus.

COMMENT: I'm uncomfortable. It sounds like we're a step ahead of ourselves. You can't start without a clearly defined purpose.

RESPONSE: We know that the overall, long-term purpose is to determine the cumulative effects of Hanford on the environment. It just requires a little thinking to define what we want in the near-term.

COMMENT: You use the term "effects". Cancer in humans is one of the effects I've heard discussed, but there are other less easily defined effects that haven't been discussed. Something like large, ugly buildings built for remediation for example. What's the effect of something like that on tourism, commerce, the ecosystem, etc.? I've heard nothing here about things like that.

RESPONSE: That's something that we're working on. We went through effects early on in the SAC meetings. Pam Doctor, Barbara Harper, and the Center for Risk Excellence (CRE) are some of the people working up the approach to identify effects. The point is that there are some pieces of the puzzle that might require an hour to sit down and define, and there are some that may require a couple of weeks or months. We're trying to balance them out. It's a mix of numerical and assessment work.

QUESTION: Are the peer reviewers going to be getting a look at the candidate and study sets?

ANSWER: The Expert Panel did say they wanted to have a look at all this, but it won't be during this upcoming meeting in February. It was brought up as a possible topic for this next meeting, but they decided to stick with their prior plans to go over the December deliverable. It's something that will probably be a topic in May.

COMMENT: It should be interesting. There are some widely divergent views about the SAC among the Panel members.

EXPERT PANEL:

COMMENT: We want to make sure that everybody has the Expert Panel meetings on their calendar for February 1-3. The Panel's main focus will be the Project Spec/LRP.

QUESTION: Are there any minutes for the past Expert Panel meeting in November?

ANSWER: There were very high level notes taken that were basically action items for the benefit of the Panel members. Dr. Edgar Berkey gave a closeout that summarized the meeting and listed the Panel's thoughts, recommendations, and path forward. The closing comments are available on the GW/VZ Integration Project website at www.bhi-erc.com/vadose in the Expert Panel section.

RESPONSE: There wasn't a lot of meat for the Panel to go through at the last meeting. Basically they said that they are encouraged by the Project direction. They had good things to say about the S&T Plan and the LRP. There were no real action items or major issues raised. They liked the approach, now let's see if they like the product.

COMMENT: There was a briefing given at the last HAB by one of the Expert Panel members, Ralph Patt. His presentation was very similar to the closing comments given by Dr. Berkey at the

meeting. He stated that there were 22 areas that the Expert Panel thought that they might want to be involved in. They defined four areas to delve into now and appointed “Panel champions” for each area. The first was interaction with stakeholders and Tribal Nations about hazard/risk issues. The champions for that are Ralph Patt and Jim Karr. The second is the peer review process with John Conaway as the champion. The third is modeling of vadose zone and groundwater with Randy Bassett and Peter Wierenga involved. The last is field investigations and data gathering. John Matuszek is that Panel champion.

QUESTION: Is there funding allocated for these sub panels? Like the field investigation of the farms for example?

ANSWER: This is something that we need to talk to Dr. Berkey about. We really haven’t received sufficient feedback on how the Panel plans to operate. One of the major topics that the Panel discussed at this last meeting was how they want to operate and define themselves. I believe that Dr. Berkey wants individual groups to do the work, who will then report back to the Panel. We don’t know at what level they plan to operate. It was something they came up with toward the end of the last meeting as they headed for the door.

COMMENT: Their original charter was to ask for help if they encountered areas outside of their expertise.

RESPONSE: This is a diverse group with eight different areas of expertise. They’ve decided to break into four separate subpanels to tackle various problems. The Panel has simply broken up to be more effective. We’re still determining their information needs and how we are going to feed them what they want.

COMMENT: Ralph Patt described the Panel’s current direction a bit at the HAB Meeting. He said that the individuals on the Panel are collecting information now, and that the Panel is deciding how they plan to operate subpanels. They aren’t actively soliciting help at this time. They may be asking for specific help from outside the Panel in the future, and they have to have the ability to bring it in if they need it.

RCRA WELL FINDINGS (Mike Thompson):

I want to bring up something that you’ll probably be hearing about fairly shortly. Preliminary results from two deep RCRA wells have returned some interesting results. Recently drilled wells located near the T-Tank Farm, show levels of approximately 1500 and 1000 ppb CCl-4 for samples collected approximately 100 feet below the water table. All of the data is not yet in, and the project scientists have just begun interpretation of the data.

ECOLOGY REORGANIZATION (Dib Goswami):

Ecology is in the process of restructuring. Stan Leja is the Acting Manager for Ecology. I (Dib Goswami) am the Cleanup Section Manager. I’ll be handling the site-wide GW/VZ issues, as well as policy and strategy issues. Phil Staats is the regulatory coordinator and will handle CERCLA, MTCA, RCRA, etc. Dave Holland will be the CRCIA liaison and will handle all Columbia River related issues. These are just interim positions which may go on for a few months. It depends on how the selection process pans out for the permanent appointments.

QUESTION: So competition is underway now for the permanent appointments?

ANSWER: Yes.

PROJECT MEETINGS MOVED (Dru Butler):

Due to stakeholder concerns about availability and scheduling surrounding the holidays, the Policy meeting scheduled for January 4 has been canceled. Also, The Monday afternoon Project Team Meeting for the 4 has been moved to Monday, January 11.

The following Monday, January 18, is a federal holiday. We want to make sure that everyone is aware that the Policy and Project meetings normally held that day are instead scheduled for Tuesday, January 19.

Looking ahead, the February meetings are also irregular. The Expert Panel meetings have superceded the Policy and Project meetings scheduled for Monday, February 1. The meetings scheduled for Monday, February 15 fall on President's Day, which is another federal holiday. Therefore, they have been moved to Tuesday, February 16.

THANK YOU TO STAKEHOLDERS (Dru Butler):

The Project wants to thank all of you for helping us make this document happen. There's no way that it would have been as good without your input. We hope everybody has a good holiday, and we'll see you all next year.

(Mary Harmon) I wanted to add how much Bob Alvarez and I, and everybody here at DOE-HQ, appreciate all the time, effort, comments, and input from everyone. We would like to ask you to continue to help us and make sure that we stay on course to make DOE-RL successful. We're looking for continued involvement from you in 1999.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROJECT PARTICIPATION:

See 6-Week Look Ahead Calendar (attached)

UPCOMING EVENTS:

See 6-Week Look Ahead Calendar (attached)

NOTE:

GW/VZ Web Site location: <http://www.bhi-erc.com/vadose>

ATTACHMENTS:

1) 6-Week Look Ahead Calendar

ATTENDEES:

Marty Bensky, Tri-Cities Caucus
Bob Bryce, PNNL
Dru Butler, BHI
Don Clark, JAI Corp.
Dib Goswami, Ecology
Mary Harmon, DOE-HQ
Dave Holland, Ecology
Mike Hughes, BHI
Gary Jewell, BHI
Tony Knepp, BHI

Stan Leja, Ecology
Katy Makeig, SMS
Fred Mann, FDNW
Jim Poppiti, DOE-RL
Wade Riggsbee, YIN
Gordon Rogers, Tri-Cities Caucus
Herb Sutter, DOE-HQ
John Williams, FDH
Rob Yasek, DOE-RL

Attachment 1

6-WEEK LOOK AHEAD CALENDAR
DECEMBER 30, 1998 – FEBRUARY 12, 1998
GW/VZ INTEGRATION PROJECT

January 11	Policy Work Group Meeting 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. – BHI – Assembly Room
January 11	Open Project Team Status Meeting 1:00 p.m. – BHI – Assembly Room
<i>January 12-13</i>	<i>Vadose Zone Book Working Meeting Seattle, WA</i>
<i>January 14</i>	<i>Hanford Advisory Board - ER Committee Meeting Richland, WA</i>
<i>January 18</i>	<i>Martin Luther King Day – Federal Holiday</i>
January 19	Policy Work Group Meeting 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. – BHI – Assembly Room
January 19	Open Project Team Status Meeting 1:00 p.m. – BHI – Assembly Room
February 1-3	Expert Panel Meetings BHI – Assembly Room
<i>February 10</i>	<i>Informational Workshop on 100 Area Cleanup Tri-Cities, WA (location to be determined)</i>
<i>February 11-12</i>	<i>Hanford Advisory Board Meeting Tri-Cities, WA (location to be determined)</i>
<i>February 15</i>	<i>President's Day – Federal Holiday</i>
February 16	Policy Work Group Meeting 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. – BHI – Assembly Room
February 16	Open Project Team Status Meeting 1:00 p.m. – BHI – Assembly Room