

Environmental
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ERC Team

Meeting Minutes

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071073

SUBJECT GW/VZ INTEGRATION PROJECT OPEN MEETING – JUNE 21, 1999

TO Distribution

FROM Michael J. Graham, GW/VZ Project Manager

DATE July 15, 1999

ATTENDEES

See Attached List

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Attendees
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NEXT GW/VZ INTEGRATION PROJECT OPEN MEETING:

Next Meeting: Monday, July 19, 1999 – 1-3 p.m.
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 June 21, 1999 in Richland, Washington at the Bechtel Hanford, Inc. (BHI) Assembly Room.

PROJECT REPORT:

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND STATUS (Michael Graham):

Project Specification/Project Summary Document:

As many of you know, we are currently in the process of revising our Project Specification. We will be turning that out at the end of June with public comments incorporated. We wanted to share the concept of where we are headed with this.

The GW/VZ Expert Panel submitted several comments. One of those was that we should break the Specification up into several smaller volumes instead of one huge document. We've done that. The Hanford Advisory Board Environmental Restoration (HAB-ER) Committee commented that there was a lot of time spent revisiting where we've been, when we should be focusing on the path forward. One other comment was that this document is not really a Specification, so we've decided to change the title to Project Summary Description to better reflect the purpose of the document. We wanted to make sure everyone is aware of the change, so at end of the month when we release it, people aren't saying, "Where's the Specification?" We changed the title in response to requests that we better reflect the content and purpose of the document in the title.

071073.doc

(Note: The three volumes of the Project Summary are available for download from the GW/VZ Project website. The address for the site is <http://www.bhi-erc.com/vadose>, and the volumes are located in the Project Documents section. If you would like a hard copy, please contact Gary Jewell at 509-372-9192 or Karen Strickland at 509-372-9236.)

Congressional Report:

The Department of Energy Headquarters (DOE-HQ) has committed that a report will be produced semi-annually for Congress about the Integration Project. Deputy Secretary of Energy T. J. Glauthier made the commitment to Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon. We are currently working on a draft, and we should have the draft to DOE-HQ for review by mid-July.

SYSTEM ASSESSMENT CAPABILITY (Charlie Kincaid):

Introduction of New Team Member:

Last week, Alex Nazareli of BHI started working with the System Assessment Capability (SAC) Team. He will be working on the risk element of the SAC.

SAC Work Group Update:

A Work Group meeting on the River Conceptual Model was held on June 17. The main topic of the meeting was the river models, but other issues were covered as well. We reviewed the minutes from the June 7 meeting. Bob Bryce talked about the overall SAC conceptual model effort, and Roger Dirkes ran the rest of the meeting. Roger gave a presentation on River Technical Element Conceptual Model Development. Other presentations were made by Bob Peterson (Groundwater/River Zone of Interaction Conceptual Model), Marshall Richmond (Columbia River Fate and Transport), Charlie Brandt (Biological Transport Conceptual Model), and Paul Eslinger (Preliminary Uncertainty Concepts for the SAC). Paul's comments included lessons learned from his work at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) and Yucca Mountain.

COMMENT: One of the issues that needs to be discussed was the limited participation from the regulators and Tribes. Dib Goswami and Phil Staats were there from Ecology, but that was about it. That was surprising, especially since the topic of discussion was the River Technical Element. A few calls after the meeting seemed to indicate that people knew about the meeting, but had other priorities. Is there some way to raise this as a priority? Input from stakeholders, regulators, and Tribal Nations is critical.

QUESTION: What are the issues on which you need input?

ANSWER: Right now, we're going through and summarizing the way past conceptual models were constructed and the alternatives. The next step is to look at those and decide the pros and cons of each, such as complexity, feasibility, and so on. It's not a "cut and dried" process, and we need input as we proceed.

COMMENT: I (Dib Goswami) would like to add something on the issue of participation. By my count, there were twenty-one people at this meeting, but only one of them was a regulator. After the meeting, I raised this as a concern with the DOE representatives and Bob Bryce of Pacific Northwest National Laboratories (PNNL). This is a problem, especially when the topic is Columbia River issues. As to the meeting itself, the information presented was good, but the amount was a little overwhelming. One of the more controversial issues discussed was how to address uncertainty. This has been a big issue for both Ecology and

Oregon. Perhaps we need to find out if there is possibly a better forum to discuss these issues. It needs to be determined how best to disseminate information and get feedback to be able to go forward. I was pleased with the meeting in general, but that's just me. There was a lot of information to grasp. This all needs to be discussed, how to incorporate input for the Columbia River especially, and the regulators and Tribes are key players in that.

COMMENT: The topic of uncertainty has been discussed to death in the past year or two, with no real concrete suggestions coming out of any of the discussions. I (Martin Bensky) think the Integration Project should just come out with a plan and tell us what that plan is. At that point if we see something we don't like, we can just tell you what we see as problems. I understand the argument of be involved in the process, but it's stalled. Being reactive is not such a terrible thing.

COMMENT: Paul Eslinger provided some good insights on uncertainty from Sandia and elsewhere. As far as concrete plans on how to move forward with uncertainty, we're not ready to spell that out just yet. The plan is to go forward and write the conceptual model documents and have those out for review, hopefully in the July timeframe.

QUESTION: Dib seems to have a package in front of him of the materials presented at that meeting. Should those presentations be sent out to a limited distribution to anyone who would like to see them? How about posting them on the web site?

ANSWER: We can do that. (The presentations from the June 17 SAC Work Group meeting are now available for download from the Project website, and are located in the SAC section of the site.)

COMMENT: Part of the participation problem is that expectations are undefined for these meetings beforehand. The Project schedules a meeting, but what do you want to get out of it? What will you be looking at? When the River conceptual model first run is complete, you said probably sometime in July, it can be assumed that it will have certain baseline assumptions. When we get it for review, what do we do with it? Those types of expectations are fuzzy right now.

RESPONSE: Right now we have meetings scheduled to discuss the various conceptual models and their alternatives. We have a meeting scheduled for August 25 on the SAC Conceptual Model Implementation for Rev. 0 where we'll discuss the constraints that the SAC places on the models. After that, we'll write up the preliminary report on the SAC conceptual models. All of the conceptual model meetings until then are feeding into that.

COMMENT: You're asking how we could have more participation, but what are you really needing? Do you think more participation is needed before you provide your first write up in July, or is the real timeframe to get from July to August 25? If that's the case, is the idea to send out something in July and request comments back by early August so they could be incorporated before August 25? I don't know what kind of comments there are going to be, but you can be sure you'll get them, especially if you're asking people to buy into particular assumptions or end products. Everybody has his or her own ideas of how to get from point A to point B, and that's why we need to work on participation more. If you get to that date, and you still feel that participation is lacking, do you back up?

- QUESTION: Speaking for the Yakamas, I (Wade Riggsbee) would really like to get back into the loop. A start would be getting a copy of the presentations from the River conceptual model meeting to look at. There have been some ongoing issues with conceptual models.
- COMMENT: Here's a quick observation from the Tri-Cities contingent (Gordon Rogers). There are very few people who possess both the technical skill and the free time needed to participate in this Project, and many of them are already involved in one way or another. The best way to make sure you get the participation you need is to announce meetings, state the purpose of the meeting and the expectations from the public, and make handouts available before the meeting if possible. After the meeting, get out relevant items to the general public for comment. Attending every meeting is an impossibility for most people, but finding time to review materials is easier.
- COMMENT: One of the main reasons to have early input on specific issues of interest, such as inventory or uncertainty, is that people have their own ideas of what they want included, what documents they might want reviewed or incorporated, or what they think might be missing. It's just a better idea to include these issues into our thinking sooner in the process so we don't have to make a huge change in direction later.
- COMMENT: We've been doing that for a year now, and there are still some ideas that are not included. It just seems like a lot of people are getting burned out. People are questioning the value added by all these meetings. Given the number of hours spent on the Project to this point, with very few tangible results, people have gotten to the point of "Why one more meeting?" It could very well be that we're finally to the point that something is happening, but the burnout has already occurred.
- COMMENT: A lot of government programs allow almost no time for the public to really get involved. As a result, a few self-funded or highly motivated individuals or groups get special opportunities to influence the process. The plan the Integration Project has adopted is the best I (Gordon Rogers) have seen so far at soliciting involvement, and would seem to be the only way to go about it. Your open meetings, distribution of minutes, and use of the web to make information available are far superior to any government program I've seen to this point, despite the flaws with time and funding.
- COMMENT: If there are key meetings coming up, then those should be highlighted and defined. If they are, then participation should increase. To this point, all of the meetings have been on pretty much the same level, and an individual has a hard time deciding which meetings are the crucial ones to attend, the meetings where decisions on key issues are made, as opposed to yet another informational meeting.
- RESPONSE: The schedule that is handed out at these Open Meetings should highlight the heavy hitters.
- RESPONSE: We'll commit to preparing a schedule for the next Monday meeting where we lay out the schedule with the purposes and expectation for the meetings.
- COMMENT: The next Open Project Meeting was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, July 6 since July 5 is a facility closure day at Hanford. Input has been that a lot of people will be taking that week

off for vacation, so we've decided to not have a meeting on July 6. We do not plan to reschedule the meeting. We'll just move on to the next scheduled meeting on July 19.

COMMENT: It is important for people to know beforehand both the nature and significance of a meeting. If the meeting is a presentation or a rehashing of old issues, what's the value added? If it's a decision-making meeting, again, what's the value added? Also, you said the constraints of the SAC on the conceptual models will be discussed in August. It would seem that constraints should be defined at the beginning of the process, rather than the middle.

RESPONSE: The conceptual model descriptions are very broad at this point. SAC Rev. 0 will benefit from this. SAC Rev. 1 will define the constraints further, and so on with the further revisions. We have some constraints defined from talking to the SAC Team and the technical element leads, but when we actually get into the construction of the assessment we'll have a better idea of applicability.

QUESTION: What are the internal constraints?

ANSWER: Budget, time, those kinds of things.

COMMENT: There is a meeting scheduled for mid-August (August 10) to discuss the SAC risk metrics, critical habitats, and conceptual models.

OFFICE OF RIVER PROTECTION (ORP)/PROJECT HANFORD MANAGEMENT CONTRACTOR (PHMC) UPDATE (John Williams):

We are continuing the decommissioning of the 41-09-39 Borehole. The bottom 130 feet have been grouted. We are working now to sample the vadose zone in the other 127 odd feet remaining. This has presented technical challenges, and we have an integrated team out there working on pulling out the casing and getting the sampling done.

Another thing on our plate is that we are getting ready to drill the new well by SX-115. The workplan is being developed. An Ecology team is resolving the preliminary workplan comments.

QUESTION: You mentioned the 130 feet you've completed of the borehole and the challenges involved. What challenges?

ANSWER: There have been two main problems. One has been that the removal of the casing hasn't gone as smoothly as hoped. The other was an equipment failure of the sidewall sampling equipment. The company that provided the equipment is now on site and providing and installing new equipment. We are committed to making this technology work. It has implications to future sampling activities.

QUESTION: Where is SX-115 located in comparison to known leakers?

ANSWER: SX-115 is a leaker.

QUESTION: Is this a downstream thing?

ANSWER: Yes, it is. The well will be on the west side of SX-115.

COMMENT: One would presume the contaminants would be moving east.

RESPONSE: There is a dip to the west there. We're staying in line of the direction of expected move.

ISSUES AND REQUIREMENTS MANAGEMENT (Rich Holten):

Susan Pickering is here from Sandia, and she will be splitting her time between here and there for the near future. She was a member of the group that visited earlier this year and showed us some configuration control technology. The approach is called Features, Events, and Processes (FEPs) and it has been implemented at the WIPP facility. From what they showed us of the program, we thought it warranted consideration here as well. It provides structure and discipline. It resembles in a way the candidate set and study set work already underway. FEPs is broader. We were attracted by the fact that this is an existing process with recognized international documentation. It's quite a bit broader than CRCIA, and it would help there as well.

Peter Swift was the lead for FEPs at WIPP, and he is now doing the same work for Yucca Mountain. He has offered to come up and make a presentation on the how and why of FEPs toward mid-July. We will get word of the date and time out as soon as the arrangements are made. We'd like to invite all interested parties to come and see a little of what this is. (NOTE: This presentation on FEPs will follow the Open Project Team Meeting on July 19. This presentation will be separate from the Open Project Meeting, and should start approximately 2 p.m. For details contact Rich Pawlowicz at 509-372-9571.)

This process is not only international; it's becoming the standard. The guidance from the DOE Integration Office is that we should take a look at this. It has a very broad candidate set inventory built into it to make sure populations are complete, and you then screen out what isn't needed, rather than building sets from scratch. From there you can reduce further to study sets and conceptual models. It should be neat to watch how CRCIA and FEPs converge.

QUESTION: You're looking at this as a replacement to CRCIA?

ANSWER: FEPs is a bigger system, but CRCIA should just fold right in and be fairly painless. We don't know quite enough yet to tell, but it looks good to this point.

COMMENT: When you decided to look at all of the requirements and decide to get rid of the stuff you don't need, you need to be sure that the people deciding what stays and what goes are the right people to be making those types of decisions. This needs to happen regardless of whether you use CRCIA or FEPs. Without the right technical experts, it falls apart completely because you're not going to have the right sets. It starts with the people, not the process.

RESPONSE: That's one of the benefits we saw with FEPs. That process was developed by international technical experts looking at study requirements from numerous contaminated sites. When you take their work and add CRCIA, you have the advantage of broader technical knowledge.

COMMENT: And having name recognition is nice too.

COMMENT: Anything beyond this is speculation. When they come to give the presentation, look at it with an open mind and the thought that this could be a useful tool.

COMMENT: One of the issues is how you characterize assumptions and divergent opinions. There are assumptions all over the place, and that raises issues about completeness. FEPs was sponsored in part by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), and several other countries contributed input and expertise. Over the years, they developed a methodology and assumptions with this diverse input. Is this the complete set? No, but it does address transport and release very well. Right now, there are about 1,200 different criteria for consideration on this list. At WIPP, that list was trimmed down to 250 or so. It all depends on what your assumptions are and at what point in the study it is tailored for.

COMMENT: Another benefit of FEPs is that it is a way to capture all issues raised and keep a record of disposition. If you have a challenge to a requirement, you get it into the record and do research, documentation, and other things needed to support the decision process. You record the process and the decision. FEPs is a record of every issue.

COMMENT: We suggested something similar about a year ago with the PNNL record process. Nothing happened.

QUESTION: When is this presentation going to be?

ANSWER: We're trying to work their schedules to have them here on Monday, July 19. We'd want to hold it in conjunction with the Project Open Meeting if we can get them here that day. We'd make it separate from the meeting, probably right after. (This is confirmed.)

OTHER ISSUES:

QUESTION: Where does the SAC work fall in the disposition baseline? Is it part of inventory? We've never really talked about post-closure states and how to define what they will be in relation to current conditions, or things like that.

RESPONSE: This has been an open issue for some time, and we need to have a dialogue and bring closure to that. Assumptions need to be defined, such as what happens if no actions are taken, etc.

QUESTION: How is the inventory proceeding if these assumptions have not been discussed?

ANSWER: We're looking from today back. We're not looking at the future yet. Inventory at this point is what it is.

COMMENT: But there are assumptions of how much cleanup has been done to this point. You had to start with certain assumptions.

COMMENT: This keeps coming up. Ecology, DOE, and the other regulators really need to nail this down soon.

RESPONSE: It's something that should be established by the Integration Project.

COMMENT: Just get something put together. What it looks like doesn't matter that much for now, because we as stakeholders can push for changes if we don't like it, but we can't comment if we don't have anything to look at.

COMMENT: For example, when we were talking amount of waste removal from the tanks, we started out with leaving up to fifty percent of the waste in each tank, but that was not acceptable. Then we changed to one percent in each, but that was too much removal. It was like playing Goldielocks. This tank is too full. That tank is too empty. We just need to define starting points.

COMMENT: Bruce Napier is now working on a site-wide scoping study and bringing all the various databases across the site into one place. He's cleaning that up and should distribute that to the core projects and the Integration Project for review this week. That would give them a chance to look at it and comment before the SAC Work Group meeting on July 14. The focus is on going forward with the inventory conceptual model and, regardless of where we end up, building a mass balance of current inventory. We want a firm handle on it holistically. From there, future movement and processing are some of the assumptions we can work out, and agree on, as a Project team. For example, is the goal one percent residual waste left in the tanks? Should it be more or less? What do we do with the waste removed? We take that set of assumptions and apply it to the current inventory. That step is fairly simple once the assumptions are agreed on. That's why the conceptual model on inventory can go forward. That work scope could be developed any time this year. It's not something critical at this particular moment. We can go forward along the current path for now.

COMMENT: It would be useful to see the sources he's consulting and the databases he's drawing from.

COMMENT: One database might have different information from another database, or the data in a certain database might have been already found to be inaccurate.

COMMENT: It would show what might be missing too.

RESPONSE: These are all strong points. There is a SAC meeting on this on July 14. Between now and then, we will provide the materials to the core projects.

COMMENT: What we need to clarify is the purpose of the meeting, which goes back to the earlier discussion. You need to tell people what you hope to accomplish. You need to convey not just what's been done but rather what we have now, where we're going, and how we plan to get there. That is the critical message to get across in order for the Project to succeed.

QUESTION: When will the minutes from the SAC Work Group meeting on the River Conceptual Models be released?

ANSWER: We'll try to have them out this week.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION:

(See attached Look Ahead Calendar)

NOTES:

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

If you have questions or comments please contact Dru Butler (509-375-4669), Gary Jewell (509-372-9192), or Karen Strickland (509-372-9236)

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) GW/VZ Integration Project Two Month Look Ahead Calendar

ATTENDEES:

Julie Atwood – BHI
Martin Bensky – Tri-Cities Caucus
Dru Butler – BHI
Don Clark – JAI Corp.
Mike deLamare – BHI
Dib Goswami – Ecology
Michael Graham – BHI
Mary Harmon – DOE-HQ
Barb Harper – Yakama Indian Nation
Dave Holland – Ecology
Rich Holten – DOE-RL
Michael Hughes – BHI
Gary Jewell – BHI
Charlie Kincaid – PNNL
Alex Nazareli – BHI
Rich Pawlowicz – BHI
Susan Pickering – Sandia National Lab
Wade Riggsbee – Yakama Indian Nation
Gordon Rogers – Tri-Cities Caucus
Virginia Rohay – BHI
John Williams – FDH
Rob Yasek – DOE-RL

ATTACHMENT 1

GW/VZ INTEGRATION PROJECT TWO MONTH LOOK AHEAD CALENDAR
JULY 19, 1999 – SEPTEMBER 20, 1999

July 19	GW/VZ Open Project Team Meeting BHI Assembly Room – 1-2 p.m. (Contact: Dru Butler) Agenda includes a high-level preview of the GW/VZ FY00 Detailed Work Plan
July 19	GW/VZ Introduction of Features, Events, and Processes (FEPs) BHI Assembly Room – following Open Project Team Meeting (approx. 2 p.m.) Purpose: Informational introduction to the FEPs process
July 20-21	Western Governors Association Northwest Regional Technology Deployment Workshop – Richland – Volpentest HAMMER Training and Education Center
July 22	HAB-ER Committee Meeting – BHI Assembly Room – 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
August 2	GW/VZ Open Project Team Meeting BHI Assembly Room – 1-3 p.m. (Contact: Dru Butler)
August 10	GW/VZ SAC Work Group Meeting – Risk Conceptual Models, Metrics, Critical Habitats – BHI Room 1B40 – 9 a.m.-Noon (Contact: Bob Bryce/Bob Boutin) Purpose: Obtain advice and consultation from regulators, stakeholders, and Tribal Nations on Risk Conceptual Model, Metrics and Critical Habitats and identify priorities for the SAC Rev. 0 analysis.
August 16	GW/VZ Open Project Team Meeting BHI Assembly Room – 1-3 p.m. (Contact: Dru Butler)
August 25	GW/VZ SAC Work Group Meeting – SAC Rev. 0, Conceptual Model Implementation – PNNL EESB Snoqualmie River Room – 1-4 p.m. (Contact: Bob Bryce/Bob Boutin) Purpose: Obtain advice and consultation from regulators, stakeholders, and Tribal Nations on Conceptual Model Implementation for SAC Rev. 0. and identify priorities on the overall approach for the SAC Rev. 0 analysis.
September 9-10	Hanford Advisory Board Meeting Seattle – Radisson Hotel
September 15-17	GW/VZ Expert Panel Meeting BHI Assembly Room – Contact: Virginia Rohay Purpose and expectations to be determined by the Expert Panel
September 15-18	Energy Communities Symposium – Richland
September 16	HAB-ER Committee Meeting BHI Assembly Room – 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
September 20	GW/VZ Open Project Team Meeting BHI Assembly Room – 1-3 p.m. (Contact: Dru Butler)