



MEETING MINUTES

Environmental Management Public Information Review Effort (EMPIRE) Committee

January 10, 2008 – Pahrump, Nevada

Members Present: Walter Wegst, Chair; Bob Gatliff, Vernell McNeal, Stacy Standley

Members not Present: Paul Adras

Department of Energy: Kelly Snyder, DDFO

Support Staff: Rosemary Rehfeldt, Navarro Research and Engineering, Inc.; Helen Neill, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV); Jennifer Ward, Graduate Student, UNLV

Walter Wegst asked Kelly Snyder if the committee could make a recommendation to DOE to create a fact sheet about the Nevada Test Site. Ms. Snyder informed the committee that a Nevada Test Site fact sheet already exists and is produced by the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). Ms. Snyder said that she would look into whether or not it would be feasible for the CAB to request that NSO EM produce a Nevada Test Site fact sheet. Ms. Snyder offered to bring copies of the NNSA NTS fact sheet to the next EMPIRE committee meeting.

The fact sheet: *Soils Project...an approach to cleanup*, was reviewed. The first sentence in the first paragraph states that, *“The Nevada Test Site (NTS) and the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) played important roles in the advancement of the nation’s nuclear testing program.”* The committee agrees that more information should be included in the fact sheet about the NTTR and the U.S Department of Defense’s (DoD’s) role in the clean up decision process.

In the second sentence of the first paragraph, TTR needs to be spelled out, so the sentence will read, *“The NTS is located 65 miles northwest of Las Vegas, and the NTTR (including the Tonopah Test Range [TTR]) surround the east, north, and west boundaries of the NTS, in south-central Nevada.”*

The committee also agreed that the third sentence in the first paragraph needs restructuring, so that it is clear that the Atomic Energy Commission is the predecessor agency to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), but that the DOE was also involved in testing, along with the DoD. The revised sentence should read, *“From 1951 through 1992, the sites were used by the U.S. Department of Energy (formerly the Atomic Energy Commission) and the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to conduct atmospheric and underground nuclear weapons tests, and chemical explosion tests of plutonium-bearing materials.”*

The next section of the fact sheet, entitled “Background,” is to be placed at the beginning of the fact sheet, before “History.” The only change to this paragraph is in the last sentence, which will read, *“These soils contain many types of contaminants including radioactive materials, oils,*

solvents, gasoline, and heavy metals, particularly lead; as well as contaminated instruments and test structures used during testing activities.”

It was decided by the committee that a “definition section” should be included within the fact sheet, which would define many of the terms used in the fact sheet verbiage.

The next section, entitled, “Restoration Efforts,” also has a couple of changes. In the first sentence of this section, the term “closure in place” should be placed and defined in the definition section. Additionally, a sentence will be inserted after the first sentence which will read, *“These sites are designated as Corrective Action Sites.”*

In the next section, entitled “Path Forward,” the last sentence uses the term “land-use scenarios.” This term will be placed and defined in the definition section. The next paragraph in this section uses the term “land withdrawal.” This term will also be placed and defined in the definition section. The very last sentence in this section, which reads, *“For more information, contact the NSO using the information provided below,”* will be taken out.

It was agreed upon, by the committee, to produce a recommendation letter to DOE for changes to the “Soils Project” fact sheet.

The committee began to look at the “Groundwater” fact sheet, but ran low on time, therefore deferred the review of this fact sheet to the next meeting. The comments that were made during this meeting on the Groundwater fact sheet can be found in the minutes from the February 6, 2008 EMPIRE Committee meeting minutes. The committee also agreed to review the Underground Test Area (UGTA) Questions and Answers booklet at the next EMPIRE committee meeting.

Walter Wegst and Stacy Standley asked Kelly Snyder to re-send the committee a copy of the list of EM video tapes. Ms. Snyder agreed to e-mail the committee this list, and Rosemary Rehfeldt will mail out copies of the UGTA Questions and Answers booklet.

The next meeting was set for February 6, 2008, at 1:30 p.m., at the Nevada Support Facility on Losee Road, in the Sedan Conference Room.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.