Environmental Management Directorate

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managed by Brookhaven Science Associates
for the U.S. Department of Energy

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Dear Peconic River Working Group:

This letter recalls some highlights from our June 4 meeting, and announces our next standing meeting.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR JUNE 4 MEETING
Present: Siva Kumar, Lloyd Nelson, Nick Gibbons, Denise Speizio, Bob Conklin, Ken White, Ron Clipperton, Andy Rapiejko, Tom Talbot, Bill Patterson, Ed Kaplan, Anthony Graves, Jen Clodius, Adrienne Esposito, Tim Green, William Medeiros, Kevin Shaw, Keith Grigoletto

As the first order of business, Skip Medeiros, the Peconic River Group Manager, and Kevin Shaw, the Peconic River Project Manager, took the working-group members on a formal tour of the completed pilot-study areas A and D.

At Area D: Skip Medeiros notes the healthy growth of the soft rushes and sedges to working group members (from left: Tom Talbot, Tim Green, Jen Clodius (Community Relations), Ed Kaplan, Adrienne Esposito, Anthony Graves (standing behind), Ron Clipperton, Skip Medeiros, Kevin Shaw, and Bill Patterson).

Just three months ago: **On March 4, the working group first toured Area D, the day before the start of work. From left are John Hall, Ron Clipperton, Byron Young (NYS DEC), Ed Kaplan, Bob Conklin, Tom Talbot, George Proios, Charles McGuckin (contract project manager), Ken White (BNL Community Relations), Skip Medeiros (BNL Group Manager), and Kevin Shaw (BNL Project Manager).**

The working group also toured Area A where the vacuum guzzler was used to remove contaminated sediment.

At Area A: Working group members Tom Talbot and Anthony Graves look over the fence to observe the extent to which Area A has returned to its natural state following the vacuum guzzler project.

The regular meeting of the working group resumed at Berkner Hall. Ken White, Community Relations, opened the meeting by recalling the risk assessment discussion at the last meeting of the Community Advisory Council.

- Ken reviewed the structure of the meeting and invited comment from CAC member, Ed Kaplan. Ed polled the working group members on whether they had a clear understanding of the risk assessment process, or whether additional information was required. Working group members acknowledged the complexity of risk assessment, but were ready to see the process brought to conclusion.
- Ken offered the following clarifications:
    - The Risk Assessment is currently being developed and will be shared with the regulators followed by the community.
    - Finalizing the risk assessment will enable the process to move forward with the development of cleanup goals and a proposed cleanup plan.
- Skip assured working group members that he wants to finish the risk assessment and put it in their hands. Similarly, he wants to finish the Preliminary Remedial Goals (PRGs) and provide them to the working group for discussion.

The meeting continued with a discussion on "Pilot Study Observations, Recommendations and Conclusions," led by Kevin Shaw.
Among the experiences of the pilot-studies, Kevin noted the following:

- Regarding documentation, certain topics such as Health & Safety need to be covered in their own distinct sections for easier review and revision.
- Obtaining permit equivalency from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation early in the process will help facilitate work preparations.
- Additional field screening will be sought by the project team to get real-time sampling analysis. Kevin noted that the analytical instrument used for the field-testing process was determined inadequate to produce results comparable with laboratory analysis. Working group member Andy Rapeijko (Suffolk Department of Health Services) requested the data on whatever samples the tool generated; Kevin agreed to provide them.
- Regarding the topsoil, working group members asked what kind of seeds it might contain, questioning whether weeds might be among them. Working group member Tim Green advised that a germination study in future topsoil should be conducted before use. Kevin stated that upland weeds would not survive wetland conditions (submerged).
- In Area D, a single access road was used successfully for all vehicle traffic. The application of a single-road can be used for about one acre of work.
- The project team will seek to improve water-level management, based on the experience of rerouting the river in Area A. Consistent damming control allows workers to excavate most efficiently.
- Power requirements may have been overestimated. Power was supplied to some worker trailers at Area D for lighting, heat, computers, and so forth. But compared to what was supplied, little power was actually consumed. Generators may be sufficient.
- The seasonal approach for cleanup work (i.e., late fall to early spring) proved to be appropriate.
- The purchase and application of the topsoil for Area D amounted to 1/3 of the total cost of the project. In future cleanup efforts, the team will look at the possibility of other sources of clean fill.
- In terms of the wetland plants, the team will explore collecting its own seeds for replanting, the success of plugs versus quart pots, and the use of transplanted vegetation from other parts of the river.

- Several contractors were used for the pilot studies. The project team will evaluate the cost and flexibility of using outside contractors versus in-house resources.

Ken next polled the working group to learn whether it had any general observations about the pilot studies. The working group offered the following comments:

- The Laboratory should restore the area where access roads were built after work is completed.
- Trees that had to be removed for work purposes should be replanted.
- Questions about vacuum guzzling were asked. The essence of the conversation was: Given the costs and the amount of equipment necessary to mobilize the vacuum guzzling, does it make sense to consider the vacuum guzzler if it were to be used only sparingly in a full-scale remediation?
- Area D seems to have a huge amount of planting. Could we get by with less planting than what was done in Area D?

OUR NEXT STANDING MEETING

Our next standing meeting will take place on July 23, 2002 from 6:30-8:30pm at Brookhaven National Laboratory, in Berkner Hall, Room "B." NOTE: Our scheduled June 25, 2002 meeting is cancelled to allow time to complete sufficient risk-assessment information to share with the working group.

PRELIMINARY AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE JULY 23 MEETING

- Pilot-study closeout reports
- Risk Assessment
- Development of Remediation Goals

VISIT YOUR WEBSITE

The Peconic River Working Group Website is set up and can be accessed over the Internet at: http://www.bnl.gov/erd/peconic/WorkingGroup/peconicgroup.html

Thank you once again for participating on the Peconic River Working Group. If you have any questions, please contact me at your convenience:

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