



## RAB MEETING MINUTES

**Date/Time:** Thursday, May 11, 2023, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**Location:** Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams

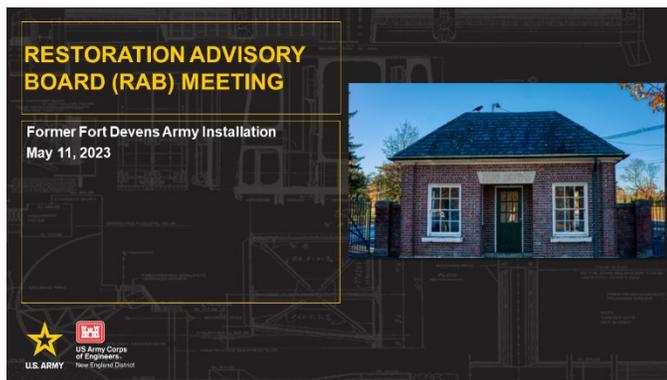
**Attendees:** Thomas Lineer, Steve Cardon (U.S. Army)  
Peter Phillips, Michael Kulbersh (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [USACE])  
Carol Keating, Shawn Lowry, Michael Daly, ZaNetta Purnell (U. S. Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA])  
Joanne Dearden (Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection [MassDEP])  
Meg Delorier, Anne-Marie Dowd (Massachusetts Development Finance Agency [MassDevelopment])  
Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Community Co-Chairs: Laurie Nehring (People of Ayer Concerned about the Environment [PACE]), Alix Turner  
RAB Members: Julie Corenzwit, Amy McCoy, Chris Mitchell  
Martha Morgan (Nashua River Watershed Association)  
Chris Turner (Haley & Aldrich, Inc.)  
Libby Levison (Harvard Board of Health)  
Andy Vitolins, Steven Perry, Amy Henschke, Heather Levesque (SERES-Arcadis 8(a) Joint Venture 2, LLC [S-A JV])  
Joan Eliyesil (Harvard Press), Anne Gagnon, Beverly Smith, Marion Stoddart, Pat Lynch, and other attendees participating by phone or otherwise not able to be identified (citizens and guests)

**Slides:** RAB meeting slides are available on the project website at:

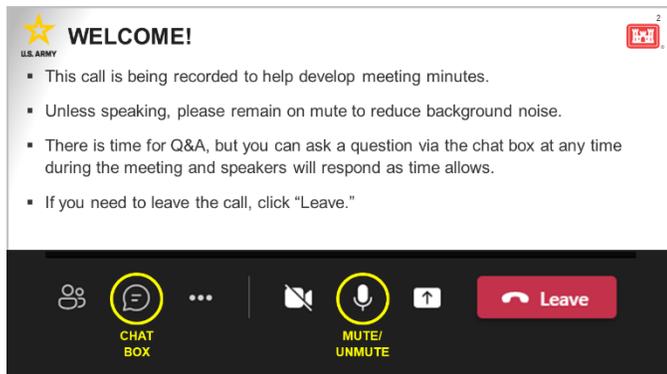
<https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-Topics/Former-Fort-Devens-Environmental-Cleanup/Restoration-Advisory-Board/>

**Please note:** Discussions described in these minutes have been paraphrased. The invitation for this meeting is provided for reference at the end of these meeting minutes.

## WELCOME & OPENING COMMENTS



Steven Perry (S-A JV Community Involvement Specialist) opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees to the meeting.



Steven Perry indicated that the meeting was being recorded to generate minutes, which will be available after the meeting. He reminded everyone that microphones will be muted to avoid background noise. He noted that attendees can use the mute/unmute button at the bottom of their screen to talk or they can enter questions in the chat box.



**WELCOME!**  
Thank you for joining us tonight.

<p><b>U.S. Army and Support:</b></p> <p>Thomas Lineer U.S. Army HQDA/ODCS G-9 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Environmental Coordinator (BEC)</p> <p>Mike Kulbersh U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) New England District</p> <p>Pete Phillips U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Baltimore District</p> <p>Andy Vitolins, Steven Perry, and Amy Henschke SERES-Arcadis JV Team</p>	<p><b>Regulatory and Other Board Members:</b></p> <p>Carol Keating Michael Daly Shawn Lowry U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Region 1</p> <p>ZaNetta Purnell USEPA Public Affairs Specialist</p> <p>Joanne Dearden Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)</p>	<p><b>Community Board Members:</b></p> <p>Julie Corenzwit Amy McCoy Dave McCoy Chris Mitchell Laurie Nehring: Co-Chair Alix Turner: Co-Chair</p>
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Steven Perry announced the leaders and contributors for the call: Tom Lineer (U.S. Army); Mike Kulbersh (USACE); Peter Phillips (USACE); Steven Perry (S-A JV Community Involvement Specialist); Andy Vitolins (S-A JV Project Manager); Amy Henschke (S-A JV Meeting Coordinator); Carol Keating (USEPA); Mike Daly (USEPA); Shawn Lowry (USEPA); Joanne Dearden (MassDEP); and RAB members Julie Corenzwit, Amy McCoy, Dave McCoy (unable to attend), Chris Mitchell, Laurie Nehring, and Alix Turner.

Carol Keating announced that this would be her last RAB meeting and introduced her replacement, Mike Daly.

**WELCOME!**

**Tonight's topics**

- Project Updates & Upcoming Work
- Nashua River Military Munitions Update
- Questions & Answers
- Community Involvement & RAB Update
- Next Meeting

Steven Perry summarized the topics to be covered: project updates from Andy Vitolins, a military munitions update from Pete Phillips, a Q&A session, updates about community involvement, and next steps.

**PROJECT UPDATES & UPCOMING WORK**

**1 | PROJECT UPDATES & UPCOMING WORK**

Discussion Areas  
PFAS Area 1  
Former Fort Devens Boundary

Andy Vitolins began the project updates by noting that various work plans and reports are going through the review process, and a lot of field work is going to be coming up in the summer and fall of 2023 once the plans get approved.

He explained that this slide highlights the areas of concern (AOCs) at Devens that would be talked about. He noted PFAS Area 1, the first area that is going through the next phase of the remedial investigation (RI) process, the North Post near the airfield (at the former fire training area [FFTA] and tetrachloroethylene [PCE] plume), Shepley's Hill Landfill (SHL), and some legacy petroleum sites on the Main Post—AOC 69W, AOC 43G, and AOC 57.

**1 | PROJECT UPDATES & UPCOMING WORK**

**Area 1 Phase 2 PFAS RI Update**

**Current Concerns**

- Horizontal and vertical extent of PFAS in soil and groundwater (overburden and bedrock)
- Sources of PFAS in drinking water supply wells at former Fort Devens (Grove Pond, Patton, and Shabokin wells)
- Potential PFAS discharge to surface water bodies
- Potential PFAS in private wells in Harvard
- Potential for PFAS migration beyond surface water bodies (Cold Spring Brook, Grove Pond)
- Risks to human health and the environment from PFAS presence in environmental media

**Updates**

- Draft Final Work Plan with RTC submitted to USEPA and MassDEP in April 2023

Andy Vitolins discussed the Area 1 Phase 2 PFAS RI updates. Phase 1 involved looking at the presence or absence of per- and polyfluorinated substances (PFAS) in Area 1, and Phase 2 is looking at how much is there, how far it has gone, and what receptors might be impacted (i.e., the nature and extent). The site-specific screening levels shown on the slide are used to help guide the investigation. These levels are represented on the image, with darker shading showing higher concentrations of PFAS. The current concerns at Area 1 are listed on the slide.

Andy mentioned that a draft final work plan with responses to USEPA and MassDEP comments was submitted in April. If the agencies agree with the changes that were made and the responses to the comments, then the document will become final. If not, then there are methods by which the parties can come to an agreement. After a final work plan is approved, field work can begin.

Laurie Nehring asked if there are data for PFAS discharge into surface water, specifically Grove Pond, Cold Spring Brook, and the Nashua River. Andy responded that sampling was done as part of the expanded site inspection phase (Phase 1 RI), and the reports with that information for Areas 1, 2, 3 are on the project website.

Laurie asked if there are data for the PFAS levels in the groundwater that is going to the arsenic treatment plant (ATP) and then to the wastewater treatment plant. Andy answered that sampling in that area has been performed and that he believes that sampling of the treatment plant effluent has also been conducted. He noted, however, that the ATP is not designed to treat PFAS, it is only designed to treat iron, arsenic, and manganese. Carol Keating (USEPA) noted via the chat that influent samples have been taken at the ATP as well.

Laurie asked if there are plans to address the PFAS coming out of the wastewater treatment plant. Andy replied that there will be an RI in the future. He also noted that, at a national level, agencies are trying to address permitted discharges from various types of plants (i.e., remediation, industrial wastewater, or municipal wastewater treatment plants) that were not designed to address PFAS and have not been investigated before. Laurie asked if the more intense human exposure sites are being addressed first and the less pressing sites will be addressed later. Andy agreed that is the case for Devens. He noted that Area 1 is being investigated first because it has three of the four potable water supply wells that are on Devens. The McPherson well is in Area 2, which is why that area will be investigated next. At a national level, the same is true—efforts are focused on areas where there is direct exposure, particularly through drinking water.

Joan Eliyesil (Harvard Press) asked what the plan is for the PFAS in the private wells in Harvard and if it was going to be determined if the PFAS in those wells are coming from Devens. Andy answered that the work in that area will evaluate if it is possible from a geology and hydrogeology (direction of groundwater flow) perspective and if the types of PFAS that have been detected historically in the private wells and those at the Devens site match. Joan asked if this project will do anything to stop the flow of PFAS from Devens if it turns out that the PFAS could be coming from Devens. Andy responded that, under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), an RI happens first to obtain the nature and extent of the contaminant, which also includes sources. After that, a feasibility study (FS) is done to evaluate all the alternatives for remediation, whether it is preventing something from getting somewhere, cleaning up the source, or other options. He noted there are not a lot of remediation options for PFAS in drinking water right now other than point of use treatment or point of exposure treatment. Joan asked if that evaluation would be part of the final work plan. Andy responded that it will be part of the FS, which follows the RI. He clarified that the RI is designed to collect the data to be able to do the FS. The remedial alternative comes out of the FS. That is followed by a record of decision, and the design and implementation of the remediation.

Martha Morgan (Nashua River Watershed Association) asked if the effluent from SHL is tested for PFAS before it goes to the Devens wastewater treatment plant. Andy Vitolins replied that it has been tested in the past but is not currently part of the required monthly sampling that is performed there. Martha asked if the levels were low enough in the past that they are not of concern. Andy answered that the effluent is going to the treatment plant and not being discharged to surface water or groundwater or elsewhere on the site. He could not say what the exact levels were in the past or if they were of concern.

Laurie asked if it is possible to gather more samples. Andy replied that there are currently no regulations that govern discharge from remediation treatment plants. He explained that under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System, facilities that discharge to surface water bodies are permitted for those discharges based on various models of mixing and toxicity, both for humans and wildlife. Right now, there are not any regulations that have been implemented for PFAS for those types of facilities, which are not subject to those permits. Remediation treatment plants have different types of permits depending on the state. In this case, the ATP at SHL has a discharge permit with the Town of Ayer, and that is what the monitoring is based on. Carol noted via the chat that there is a draft SHL focused feasibility study under review right now.

Chris Mitchell stated that, since there are some known hot spots of PFAS, it is important to understand whether the remedies that are being used are contributing to a greater problem or moving PFAS around the community in a way that is going to be harmful in the long term. He mentioned that follow up on the effluent concentrations and whether they are of concern is important. Andy mentioned that, in general, the PFAS concentrations around the SHL area are lower, in many cases much lower, than they are in Area 1.



**1 | PROJECT UPDATES & UPCOMING WORK**

**Former Moore Army Airfield Update**

**Current Concerns**

- PFAS in soil and groundwater at AOC 31 - Former Fire Training Area (FFTA)
- PFAS discharge to surface water (Nashua River)
- Perchloroethylene (PCE) in groundwater; plume reduced through remediation since 2004.

**FFTA Pre-RI Data Collection and Treatability Study**

**Objectives:** Collect additional data to support bench-scale treatability studies for FFTA soil.

**Tasks:** Collect soil and groundwater samples to evaluate PFAS concentrations with depth; conduct bench-scale treatability study of potential in-situ remedial technologies for soil.

**Updates:** Laboratory treatability study is ongoing.

**Next Steps:** Lysimeter installation and data evaluation.

Andy Vitolins gave an update on the former Moore Army Airfield. The slide shows portions of the airfield that have been addressed recently under this program. The first is the PCE treatment area (AOC 50). PCE is a dry-cleaning chemical (i.e., a chlorinated solvent), and this plume emanated from parachute cleaning operations. Historically, there has been a lot of in situ remediation work done over the past two decades to the point where most of that former plume is no longer present. The area that is outlined shows where the plume was originally. Very little of the remaining plume exceeds drinking water standards, but there still is monitoring that happens there.

The other area that is being addressed is the FFTA (AOC 31), which is a separate AOC from the PCE plume. This area was used to practice



putting out fires, which in many cases was done using aqueous film-forming foam firefighting foams. Because of this, there are PFAS in that area, and there has been a lot of characterization work done already in advance of the RI, including collecting samples and performing bench-scale studies. The bench-scale studies have been continuing for several months, and they look at potential ways to either entrain or remove the PFAS. The data from those studies will continue coming in throughout the summer.

The next step will be to install lysimeters, which are monitoring wells installed above the water table. The lysimeters will capture water as it percolates down toward the water table, and the PFAS concentrations in that water will be evaluated. It will give an idea of how much of the PFAS in the soil are leaching directly to the groundwater. There are mathematical ways to calculate that, but this method provides empirical data of what actually happens at a particular site.

Laurie Nehring asked for a summary of where the plume is and what the levels of PFAS are. Andy replied that the levels beneath the FFTA are in the parts per billion range. The current guidelines in Massachusetts and the proposed USEPA and existing USEPA guidelines are in the parts per trillion range. One part per billion is 1,000 parts per trillion. Right now, Massachusetts regulates the sum of six PFAS compounds at 20 parts per trillion. There are concentrations in the FFTA that are in the parts per billion range. Closer toward the Nashua River, those concentrations are back down in the parts per trillion range and much closer to the regulation level. Laurie asked if she could receive that information. Andy replied that he could point her to the reports online.

**1 | PROJECT UPDATES & UPCOMING WORK**

**Shepley's Hill Landfill Update**

**Current Concerns**

- Ability of existing groundwater extraction system to meet cleanup goals
- Safety and reliability of existing aboveground groundwater treatment system (aka, ATP)

Andy Vitolins gave an update on SHL. SHL is shown on the figure, with the open area in the image being the capped area that is maintained as grass. The groundwater extraction system is at the north end. Plow Shop Pond is to the east. Between the landfill cap and Plow Shop Pond is the barrier wall, which was installed about 10 years ago to prevent groundwater from the landfill from entering Plow Shop Pond. The north impact area (NIA on the figure) is where the groundwater heads towards Nonacoicus Brook. The groundwater extraction system extracts groundwater for treatment at the downgradient edge of the landfill.

The concerns here are whether the groundwater extraction system, which has been operating for almost 20 years, can meet the cleanup goals that have been identified for the landfill and whether the ATP can

be made safer. To treat arsenic, the geochemistry of the groundwater needs to be changed from reducing (in solution and traveling with the groundwater) to oxidizing (not in solution). When the arsenic is in an oxidizing state, it comes out as a sludge, and that sludge is then processed and disposed of off site. Right now, to get arsenic to that oxidizing state, chlorine gas is used. However, this is not ideal for safety, so the U.S. Army intends to switch to permanganate.

**1 | PROJECT UPDATES & UPCOMING WORK**

**Shepley's Hill Landfill Update (continued)**

<p><b>Groundwater Remedy Evaluation</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Evaluate alternatives to existing groundwater extraction system.</p> <p><b>Tasks:</b> Focused Feasibility Study (per USEPA 2016 SHL SOW Phase 3).</p> <p><b>Updates:</b> Draft Focused Feasibility Study submitted March 2023; 3<sup>rd</sup> Extraction Well Installation and Pilot Testing summer/fall 2023.</p>	<p><b>Improve Performance of Existing Groundwater Extraction System</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b> Optimize the aboveground treatment process; pilot test of improved groundwater capture with 3<sup>rd</sup> extraction well.</p> <p><b>Tasks:</b> Replace oxidant with permanganate (currently chlorine).</p> <p><b>Updates:</b> System upgrades in summer 2023.</p>
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For the groundwater remedy evaluation, Andy noted that an FS is being done to look at alternatives to the current remedy to understand if it is still the best way to treat the arsenic associated with SHL. The FS draft was submitted in March, and it is being reviewed by USEPA and MassDEP.

The existing extraction system is going to change from using chlorine to using permanganate, which is a much safer compound. The U.S. Army has already done the testing that shows it will be as effective in removal. The upgrade will happen this summer.

Concurrent with that upgrade, the U.S. Army is going to install and operate another extraction well. Right now, there are two extraction

wells associated with the ATP. A third one is going to be installed to see if it improves the performance of the ATP. The well is going to be installed while the oxidant is being replaced to minimize the plant downtime. However, the schedule is dependent on the availability of the equipment that needs to be manufactured. Lead times for a lot of things are extended at this time because of supply chain issues.



 **1 | PROJECT UPDATES & UPCOMING WORK** 

**Shepley's Hill Landfill Update**  
(continued)

**Plow Shop Pond Barrier Wall Evaluation**  
**Objective:** Confirm that the barrier wall is preventing groundwater discharge containing arsenic to Plow Shop Pond.  
**Tasks:** Conduct field investigation in accordance with Work Plan approved in April 2022.  
**Updates:** Field work to be conducted summer/fall 2023.

**Long-Term Monitoring**  
**Objective/Task:** Groundwater sampling performed semi-annually to evaluate remedy performance.  
**Updates:** Draft 2022 Annual Report on data collected spring and fall 2022 was submitted May 2023; spring 2023 sampling scheduled for June 2023.

5/19/2023

Andy Vitolins discussed the barrier wall at SHL and the long-term monitoring that is continuing at SHL. The barrier wall was put in about 10 years ago. It is performing well; however, additional studies are needed to make sure that it is performing as it was designed. The work plan to do that has already been approved, and the field work is going to be conducted this summer and fall. During the same time, some samples will be collected for the USEPA Office of Research and Development for some concurrent studies.

All of the sites at Devens currently have long-term monitoring for groundwater, with some having monitoring of surface water as well. The draft reports for last year's monitoring have been submitted and are under review. Spring sampling is scheduled for June.

Julie Corenzwit asked why the switch to permanganate did not happen much sooner. Andy responded that he could not speak to why it took so long. However, he did say that the reason it is taking so long to implement is that there have been supply chain issues. He also noted that any time there is a change in a remedial process, it has to be approved and proven to work. Tom Lineer (U.S. Army) added that the contracting process takes some time even after the decision has been made to make a change.

Laurie Nehring asked if the third well being installed would impact the wetlands and what information went into the decision to do this. She noted that the public was not able to have input on this decision even though it is something that could impact Ayer. Andy explained that the U.S. Army does not plan to increase the amount of groundwater that is pumped. It would only change where the water is removed. The current withdrawal rate is approximately 50 to 60 gallons per minute. That would not be increased; the extraction rates from the individual wells would be varied so that the extraction is distributed across that area. No impacts to the wetlands are expected because the withdrawal rate is not going to be increased and the well is going to be in the same general area as the other two wells.

Laurie asked if they were taking any measurements to confirm the expectations that the wetlands would not be impacted. Andy replied that there will be additional monitoring wells installed where the extraction wells are, and the water levels in those wells and other wells are going to be extensively monitored. Mike Daly (USEPA) added that the addition of another well is an optimization step to improve the capture of the off-site migration of the plume. It is not changing the overall water balance; it is just a matter of getting a better capture zone to achieve the objective.

Julie asked if anything is going on with the pilot tests for the air sparging. Andy replied that the pilot testing was completed, and the report has been finalized. The air sparging technology itself was included in the FS that was submitted, which is an example of using information from a pilot study to inform what went into the FS. Julie asked if that would be one of the remediation methods under consideration. Andy stated that it is one of the technologies that is evaluated in the FS. Mike Daly added that the pilot study report validates the technology in its applicability to this site, but the actual details of that technology and how it would be rolled out would be part of the FS process.

Laurie replied that the public would not have access to the information in the FS until a decision had been made. Mike Daly replied that the FS report is not a decision document; it just evaluates alternatives. Tom added that when the decision document is released, that is the opportunity for the community to add their input. That is a separate part of the process from the FS. He noted that although the public may have been involved in other parts of the process for this project in the past, it is inconsistent with the law. Joanne Dearden (MassDEP) added that the decision document will make the U.S. Army's recommendation for the preferred remedial alternative, but all the stakeholders will be able to review and comment. If anyone strongly disagrees, the U.S. Army, MassDEP, and USEPA will take that input. This means the public will have an opportunity to review and provide comments on the remedial alternatives. Mike Daly added that when the FS report is finalized, he would expect that it would be released to the public so that they could see how the alternatives were evaluated. Tom agreed that that would be the case.

Laurie asked if an email was sent about the air sparging pilot study report being released. Andy replied that an email had been sent. Laurie asked if it was possible to get the reports as hard copies. Andy replied that even the regulators, USEPA and MassDEP, do not get hard copies anymore. The federal government is making everything digital now. Amy McCoy asked if a notification is sent out every time something is posted to the project website. Andy replied that this is the case. Emails used to come from Julie Jaeger, but they are now coming from Amy Henschke of Arcadis. Andy also noted that there is a slide in the presentation that shows which documents have been released since the last meeting. Amy noted that it is hard to keep up with because of the overwhelming amount of information and the large size of the documents. Steven Perry agreed that the documents can be large but added that the RAB members should reach out to the project team if they have questions about them. Mike Kulbersh (USACE) added that the air sparge report is on the website under Shepley's Hill Landfill; it is a five-part report with links to open each part. Along with that is the final SHL ATP design memorandum and the final barrier wall performance-monitoring work plan. Andy noted that when someone is looking just at the text, they can go to the conclusions or recommendations section to understand the main points, without looking through all the appendices or the whole document. Laurie noted



that the RAB members are volunteers and may not have a second computer screen to be able to view the map and the text at the same time.

Steven commented that Laurie’s question about the wetlands and SHL was a good example of how RAB members can have substantive input that the U.S. Army and the agencies need to hear and then be able to explain sufficiently to address the community’s concerns. Mike Kulbersh added that at the current pumping rate, the drawdown does not go far from the pumping well itself and does not propagate out to Nonacoicus Brook or Main Street. The third well that is being added is only about 200 feet east of Extraction Well #1. The change will involve rebalancing the flow, not changing the water balance.

Julie asked if the issue was not with the drawdown but with the amount of water going to the ATP instead of going to the wetlands. Mike Kulbersh reiterated that the rate is not changing. A little more water would be pulled from the east but, as a result, more water from the west would be allowed to go to the wetlands. Mike Daly agreed that the water balance is not fundamentally affected by this rebalancing.

Carol Keating asked via the chat if someone could show a forward particle map from the pilot test memorandum. Andy said that the map that Carol was referring to has to do with output of the groundwater model, and he could show that at either the next business meeting or next RAB meeting or provide a schematic of it. Mike Daly added that it is a great tool, but there is a question about the degree to which the model can reflect reality. He stated it comes down to having a robust monitoring plan to see if the system meeting the performance objectives. Mike Kulbersh mentioned that the work plan for the ATP was on the document repository. He also added that U.S. Geological Survey was heavily involved in the review and approval of the model.

**1 | PROJECT UPDATES & UPCOMING WORK**

**Former Main Post Update**

**Supplemental Post-ROD RIs for AOCs 69W, 57, and 43G**

**Current Concern:** Is current groundwater remedy still effective / protective?

**Objective:** Evaluate fate and transport of remaining contaminants.

**Tasks:** Temporary and permanent groundwater monitoring well installation, groundwater sampling, groundwater flow evaluation.

**Updates:** Draft Final Work Plans for all three sites submitted to USEPA and MassDEP. Field work anticipated start in summer 2023.

**LUCIPs for AOCs 44/52, AOC 69W, AOC 57, and SA 71**

**Current Concern:** ROD-specified land use controls have been implemented but are not memorialized in CERCLA documents.

**Objective:** Memorialize requirements for implementing, monitoring, and enforcing ROD-specified land use controls.

**Tasks:** Prepare LUCIPs for MassDEP and USEPA approval.

**Updates:** Draft Final AOC 69W LUCIP submitted April 2023. Draft Final LUCIPs for AOCs 44/52, AOC 57, and SA 71 will be submitted to USEPA/MassDEP in June 2023 upon USEPA acceptance of AOC 69W LUCIP.

Andy Vitolins discussed the work being done at the legacy petroleum sites—AOC 69W, which is located at Parker Elementary School; AOC 57, which is along Cold Spring Brook; and AOC 43G, which was a former gas service station. The objective is to determine if the current remedy for these sites is still effective and protective. For these sites, there will be supplemental RIs to take look at conditions now as opposed to 20 to 30 years ago. That will involve groundwater monitoring, well installation, and groundwater sampling. All three work plans are in the draft final phase. They will likely be final soon, at which time they will be posted on the website. Field work is going to start this summer and move into the fall.

Other work will include preparing land use control implementation plans (LUCIPs) for AOCs 44/52, AOC 69W, AOC 57, and SA 71. Land use controls are the administrative controls that are placed on sites to prevent exposure to certain contaminants. Examples of land use controls would be prohibiting the installation of a groundwater drinking water well or prohibiting residential development. The LUCIPs present a summary of what those controls are and the procedures to confirm that those controls are still in place. If they are not in place, it explains what needs to happen to get them back into place. These LUCIPs are also moving through the review process, and most of them are in the draft final stage.

**1 | PROJECT UPDATES & UPCOMING WORK**

**Final Documents Posted Since Last RAB Meeting**

- None.

**Draft Documents Since Last RAB Meeting**

- Draft Focused Feasibility Study – Shepley’s Hill Landfill Groundwater Remedy
- Draft 2022 Annual Monitoring Reports – Main Post, SHL, MAAF (AOC 50)

**Response to Comments / Revised Documents Since Last RAB Meeting**

- Draft Final Area 1 Phase 2 PFAS RI Work Plan (with RTC)
- Draft Final AOC 69W Post-ROD Supplemental Remedial Investigation Work Plan (with RTC)
- Revised Draft Final AOC 69W LUCIP (with RTC)

Andy Vitolins gave an update on the latest documents. There have not been any final documents in the last 3 months; however, there are many documents in review. New documents that have entered the review stage are the focused feasibility study and the annual monitoring reports. Documents that have been revised to respond to comments are the PFAS Area 1 Phase 2 RI Work Plan, the Supplemental RI Work Plan, and a revised LUCIP.

Carol Keating mentioned that many of these documents are with USEPA for review right now. She also noted that with the LUCIPs, the goal is to get one document that contains both the CERCLA land use controls and the restrictions that have been put on the U.S. Army for transferring deeds so that all of the relevant site-specific restrictions for a particular parcel are in one place. It has been done for one site so far, and the plan is to do it for the other sites now.



**2 | PROJECT UPDATES & UPCOMING WORK**

**Nashua River Military Munitions Updates**

**Geophysical Investigation**

- Side-scan sonar (SSS)/bathymetry survey operations commenced in March 2023 followed by quality control seeding in April 2023; additional SSS performed in April 2023 to prepare for underwater digital geophysical mapping (DGM)

**Anomaly Avoidance Activities**

- Planned to support next Nashua River Watershed Association (NRWA) volunteer event in summer 2023

**Underwater Invasive Investigation**

- Investigation of underwater anomalies to begin following approval of anomaly list resulting from geophysical investigation



Pete Phillips (Project Manager with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District) gave an update on the Nashua River military munitions project. The goal of the project is to assess whether there is an explosive safety hazard from potential discarded military munitions within the Nashua River. The study area is depicted on the slide. The areas of potential interest are circled on the image and are focused on either the bridges or areas where military munitions could have been discarded.

Field work related to the geophysical investigation started with the side-scan sonar (SSS) and the bathymetry survey in early March. The data were processed and used to determine if there were underwater obstructions within the river and what the river bottom depths were.

Next, a quality control seeding event occurred in April, which involved the placement of industry standard objects to support verification that the equipment that would be part of the underwater digital geophysical mapping (DGM) survey is working properly. During that quality control seeding event, soft sediment conditions on the river bottom were observed, and obstructions such as large fallen trees within the navigation path were identified and needed to be cleared. These conditions were most pronounced along the southernmost portion of the study area, just south of the State Route 2 bridge. In addition, obstructions were determined to have moved following a snow melt and rain event in March, and those changes were noted during the quality control seeding. That posed a safety concern for the team performing the work. Given the change in the underwater conditions, a second SSS survey was performed in April to determine where the underwater obstructions were. The project team is currently evaluating the changes in those conditions to mitigate the potential impacts to the underwater DGM survey equipment to ensure that quality data are going to be collected in a safe manner.

For anomaly avoidance activities, the USACE is still planning to support the Nashua River Watershed Association and their volunteer event this summer for the scouting and removal of water chestnuts.

The underwater intrusive investigation, which includes diving on the underwater geophysical anomalies, will begin after the anomaly list obtained from the geophysical investigation is approved (expected to be next spring).

Laurie Nehring mentioned that PACE is conducting water chestnut removal events in Grove Pond as well. She asked if they should be more cautious than they currently are based on what has been found during the geophysical investigation. Pete replied that they should plan to maintain the safety practices that they have put into place. He noted that the soil conditions related to the SSS seem to be exclusive to the area down near the State Route 2 bridge and up north near the dam. In these locations, there is a muck interface atop the hard bottom of the river. If an item descended into the river and landed on that muck, it would settle within that muck and stop at the hard bottom of the river. He noted that, right now, they are just mapping the site conditions and do not know where any anomalies are until the DGM survey is conducted. After the DGM survey, the anomalies would be further investigated with the intrusive investigation.

Laurie asked that, if red flags go up while they are doing their investigation, someone notify her or PACE so that they could be forewarned. Pete clarified that when he mentioned that there were safety hazards in the site conditions, he was not referring to identified munitions hazards. They were hazards to the survey team when they were trying to pull their equipment through the river. The munitions part of the study has not happened yet. This work is leading up to that.

Amy McCoy asked if there is good signage in places where people have access to the Nashua River so that they know what to look for. She mentioned that there is a new river trail that is cut through Oxbow that abuts the airfield, and there is not any signage there. Steven Perry replied that there is a public outreach plan relative to military munitions. As part of that plan, letters are mailed out every year to stakeholders, including stores and bait shops, with information and cards that explain the 3 Rs for munitions safety and have photos of what munitions might look like. There is also signage at a number of locations. One sign at the Harvard boat launch was damaged and has been replaced. Amy added that the Oxbow is cutting some new trails closer to Moore Army Airfield and commented that a placard for some of those newer trailheads might be helpful. Andy noted that the area near the airfield is north of the area that is being investigated for potential munitions, which ends at the dam along Main Street. Meg Delorier (MassDevelopment) added that they have been tracking the signage along all of the sites. She concurred that the new trail does not go anywhere near an area that would be of concern. She also noted that if anyone notices that a sign is missing near the Nashua River, they can let her know, and MassDevelopment will replace the sign. MassDevelopment has just finished a survey of all of the signage to make sure that everything is posted appropriately.

Laurie noted that they are going to have a full summer of water chestnut pulling and everyone is welcome to sign up for it online. She noted they have six boats, so people do not need to bring their own. She also noted that the PFAS health study is ongoing, and PACE is looking for participation from people who formerly lived in Ayer and had access to Ayer drinking water.

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



U.S. ARMY **3 | QUESTIONS & ANSWERS** 14



5/12/2023

No additional questions

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & RAB UPDATE

U.S. ARMY **4 | COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & RAB** 15

 <p>Community Update factsheet will be distributed soon</p>	 <p>Digital Administrative Record (AR) continues to be populated with project documents</p>	 <p>Military munitions annual notifications will be sent out soon and sign was replaced at Harvard boat launch</p>	 <p>The next quarterly RAB meeting will be August 10, 2023</p>
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The Community Involvement Plan (CIP) and other information is available on the Fort Devens Environmental Cleanup website at: <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/missions/projects-topics/former-fort-devens-environmental-cleanup/>

Digital AR link is now live and initial documents are available at: <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-Topics/Former-Fort-Devens-Environmental-Cleanup/Administrative-Record/>

5/12/2023

Steven Perry gave an update on community involvement activities. The fact sheets are primarily written for general public who might not be aware of what is going on. This next fact sheet is going to be an update about PFAS and the work that is going to go on this summer, as well as the FFTA. The digital administrative record continues to be populated. Staff will be out at Devens to continue scanning historical paper documents and uploading them to the website. The current focus is on documents related to SHL and PFAS, and nearly 100 documents have been posted to the website so far. As discussed, the military munitions effort is continuing to make sure the awareness stays high, particularly at this time of year.

## NEXT STEPS & MEETING

U.S. ARMY 10

**THANK YOU!**  
**YOUR PARTICIPATION IS APPRECIATED!**

**NEXT RAB MEETING IS:**  
**AUGUST 10, 2023**

(Second Thursday of the month)

5/12/2023

Steven Perry noted that the next meeting is August 10, 2023. There will be a technical session for RAB members on June 29, 2023, that will help set the stage for the agenda for the August meeting. Laurie Nehring asked if the date for the August RAB meeting could be changed since she will be traveling. Steven replied that he would discuss changing the date with RAB members and the U.S. Army.



RAB MEETING INVITE

**Former Fort Devens Army Installation  
Notification**



**Please join us for the next Former Fort Devens RAB Meeting,  
Thursday, May 11, 2023, 6:30 pm**

Our next RAB meeting will be held via Microsoft Teams. Please join by clicking this link:

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or you can call in to hear the audio only:

+1 213-379-9608

Phone Conference ID:

833 968 658#

We hope you will join us to actively discuss the following topics and share your ideas:

Welcome to existing members and new participants!

Project Updates & Upcoming Work

Nashua River Military Munitions Update

Questions & Answers

Community Involvement & RAB Board Updates

Next Steps & Meeting

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Bring your thoughts about the RAB and questions about the project. This meeting will be recorded and a meeting summary will be posted on the project website at:

<https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/missions/projects-topics/former-fort-devens-environmental-cleanup/>

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If you have any questions, please send an email to and we will reply:

[FormerFortDevensRAB@arcadis.com](mailto:FormerFortDevensRAB@arcadis.com)