

## Responsiveness Summary

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The Air Force used the North/East/West Industrial Operable Unit (NEWIOU) Soil, Sediment, and Surface Water Proposed Plan; the West/Annexes/Basewide/Operable Unit (WABOU) Soil Proposed Plan; and the 8 July – 8 August 1998 public comment period to promote public input on the basewide soil remediation approach. The public received these Proposed Plans just prior to the start of the public comment period. To encourage public comment, the Air Force listed the phone numbers and E-mail addresses of Air Force and Cal-EPA Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) representatives in the Proposed Plans; mailed more than 1,300 copies of the Proposed Plans to interested community members; distributed copies of the Proposed Plans to local libraries; and held a public meeting on 23 July 1998 at the Fairfield Senior Center.

Several community members attended the public meeting, and the Air Force received oral comments from several people, including Mr. Jim Whalen, Mr. David Kanouff, and Mr. Jon Weiss, all of which were members of the Travis Air Force Base (AFB or Base) Restoration Advisory Board at the time of the public comment period. Mr. Rick Abbott submitted a comment on the basewide soil remediation approach to the Air Force during the public comment period. A written transcript of the public meeting contains the oral comments and is available for public review at the Travis AFB Information Repository, located at the Vacaville Public Library. The oral comments concerning the cleanup of contaminated soil at Travis AFB are presented below in a paraphrased form for greater clarity. The Air Force based the selection of soil remedial actions in the WABOU on the documents in the Travis AFB Administrative Record and on public comments.

**Public Comment 1 from Mr. Jim Whalen: There was concern whether the CAMU proposal had accounted for the synergistic effect of multiple chemicals in the soil within the CAMU.**

*Air Force Response:* The NEWIOU Soil, Sediment and Surface Water Record of Decision will present a detailed chemical analysis of the material proposed for placement in the CAMU. This analysis will show that the soil contaminants placed in the CAMU are compatible with the existing waste and with each other. This analysis is necessary in order to meet the criteria found in the federal and California CAMU regulations.

**Public Comment 2 from Mr. David Kanouff: There was concern that the soil contaminants that do not readily decompose through natural attenuation, such as PCBs and pesticides, will contaminate the local groundwater beneath the CAMU.**

*Air Force Response:* There are three considerations that alleviate this concern. First, the design of the CAMU will specify that there will be a five-foot separation between the contaminated soil from other soil sites and the water table. This will ensure that the consolidated soil sits above the water table and is not in physical contact with the groundwater. Second, the CAMU cap above the contaminated soil is a low-permeability barrier that significantly reduces the amount of rainwater that would flow through the soil and transport

contaminants to the local groundwater. Finally, contaminants such as PCBs, pesticides, and metals are relatively immobile. Most of the mobile contaminants have either volatilized into the atmosphere or dissolved into the local groundwater. The remaining contaminants are suitable for placement into the CAMU, because they are relatively immobile. To support this conclusion, the leachability assessment demonstrated that the consolidated soil would not adversely impact groundwater. The low-permeability cap constructed above this soil will increase this immobility, because there will be much less rainwater infiltration through the contaminated soil than that which occurs today.

**Public Comment 3 from Mr. Jon Weiss: Has Travis AFB established target levels for the contaminated materials proposed for the CAMU that are acceptable to the regulatory agencies and to the Air Force?**

*Air Force Response:* The regulatory agencies received and reviewed the proposed contaminant target (or acceptance) levels based on computer modeling and other supporting rationale in a document known as the CAMU Technical Memorandum. The Air Force and regulatory agencies will finalize these levels in the NEWIOU Soil, Sediment and Surface Water ROD. One source of supporting rationale is the leachability assessment, which demonstrated that the target levels for the consolidated soil do not pose a potentially adverse impact to groundwater.

*EPA Response:* The State is the lead regulatory agency for landfill closures and for the CAMU. The CAMU proposal for Travis AFB will be going through a review process to demonstrate that the synergistic effects and persistence of chemicals will not create an environmental problem. Modeling and calculations that support this proposal will be presented to the public.

**Public Comment 4 from Mr. Rick Abbott: Has Travis AFB considered the use of Supercritical Oxidation Steam, a treatment technology used by the Texas Heavy Oil Recovery Company, to break down the soil contaminants?**

*Air Force Response:* The WABOU Feasibility Study (FS) evaluated a large number of potential soil treatment technologies for use at the WABOU soil sites. The FS considered a technology known as Steam Stripping/Metal Extraction to be an effective method of removing organic compounds and heavy metals from soil. However, this technology was rejected due to its extensive equipment, labor, and energy requirements and the associated high capital and maintenance costs. If this technology can be shown to remediate contaminated soil in a cost-effective manner, then the Air Force will consider it for future soil remediation projects. The Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence (AFCEE) supports the evaluations of innovative technologies and provides opportunities for small businesses to assist in remediation projects. Travis AFB gave Mr. Abbott information to assist him in contacting AFCEE.

## **Second Public Comment Period**

In February 2000, Travis AFB printed a fact sheet that described significant changes to the soil remedial actions at two sites: Building 916 and the Railhead Munitions Staging Area. After mailing the fact sheet to approximately 1,300 local community members and providing copies to the three local libraries, the Base initiated a 23 February – 24 March

public comment period to obtain public input to the remedial action decisionmaking process. Additionally, the Base posted the fact sheet and accompanying news release on its Environmental Restoration web site ([www.travis.af.mil/pages/enviro](http://www.travis.af.mil/pages/enviro)).

To further promote community acceptance of the remedial action changes, the environmental office held a public meeting on 15 March 2000 at 7:00 p.m. at the Fairfield-Suisun Chamber of Commerce, 1111 Webster Street, Fairfield, CA. At this meeting the Base described the two changes to the soil remedial actions and offered to recapitulate the other remedial actions that had not changed. The Base also offered to provide the status of the three sites that had been pulled out of the WABOU to prevent a delay in the signing of the (West/Annexes/Basewide Soil Record of Decision) WABOU Soil ROD.

Mr. David Kanouff was the only community member who attended the public meeting. He had no questions concerning the proposed changes and had no interest in hearing a summary of the other sites mentioned above.