

Restoration Advisory Board (RAB)

for the

*former Naval Station Roosevelt
Roads*

Presented to

**Community Members
Ceiba, Puerto Rico**

November 28, 2006





The Cleanup Process

During the mid-1970s, the U.S. Department of Defense started a program to investigate hazardous waste. This is called the

Environmental Restoration Program





CERCLA and RCRA

- **The Environmental Restoration Program can include actions under two laws:**
- **Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA)**
 - to investigate and cleanup past waste sites
 - to ensure that property transferred to new owners is environmentally suitable for use
- **Resource Conservation & Recovery Act (RCRA)**
 - to manage the disposal of present and future wastes





Former Roosevelt Roads

- **1994**
 - RCRA permit to manage wastes
 - Investigation and cleanup of waste sites underway
- **Naval Station was closed in 2004**
 - Additional possible waste sites identified for investigation
- **2006: RCRA Consent Order to guide investigation and clean up**
- **CERCLA “early transfer authority” allows Navy to sell parcels to new owners who will conduct the cleanup**
 - Governor of Puerto Rico must concur that the property is environmentally suitable for intended use
 - Public comment period





Community Involvement is important

- **Why should the local community be involved?**
 - Potentially affected by cleanup decisions
 - Should have input into the decision process
 - Have different interests, priorities and perspectives
 - Can help identify issues and values that should be considered





Community involvement in cleanup decisions

- **RCRA**

- Public comments on a Proposed Consent Order between the Navy and EPA (September 2006)
- Public comments on Corrective Measures Studies: before site-specific cleanup decisions are made (several dates in future)

- **CERCLA**

- Public comments on early transfer decision before Governor's approval



Restoration Advisory Board Policy

- **Navy and EPA guidance promotes Restoration Advisory Boards (RABs) as a vehicle of community involvement**
 - RAB participation ensures consistent public awareness and involvement throughout the cleanup process, not just at the end
 - RABs are required by DoD policy where closed bases are being transferred





Purpose of a RAB

- **A forum for exchanging information between agencies and the community**
 - Opportunity for community to review progress and discuss with the agencies' decision makers
 - Opportunity for agencies to obtain constructive community review and comments on environmental cleanup activities





Purpose of a RAB (continued)

- **Advice from the RAB provides the agencies with a much-needed local perspective**
 - Government agencies are legally responsible for making environmental restoration decisions
 - *Navy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board*
 - The agencies will give respectful consideration to the comments of RAB members





When is a RAB formed?

- When military installations are closed
 - At any Navy installation with an Environmental Restoration Program
 - Where there is sufficient community interest
 - If a request is made by the local or state government
- **Because Roosevelt Roads is closed and will be transferred to new owners, a RAB is needed**





Make-up of the RAB

- **Usually about 20-25 members total**
 - Includes local community members and representatives from Navy, State and EPA
- **Should reflect the different interests and concerns of the local community**
 - Long-time and new residents, businesses, fishing, farming, environmental, medical, people who belong to groups, and people who don't...
- **RAB meetings are always open to the public**



Potential Candidates for Membership

- **Local government officials and agencies**
- **Local residents**
 - Business owners/operators
 - School Principal or Teacher
 - Religious leader
 - Civic and social group leaders
 - Interested individuals
- **What is “local”?**
 - Ceiba, Naguabo and Fajardo





Forming a RAB

- **Announce the formation of a RAB**
 - Explain what a RAB does
 - Invite interested members of the public to join the RAB
 - *A public notice was placed in local newspapers*
 - *Flyers were mailed and handed out*
- **A public information meeting is held**
 - That's why we're here tonight





RAB Application Process

- **Interested people complete a community interest form**
 - Reason for interest in the RAB
 - What benefit does the person offer to the RAB
 - Personal information is kept private, but RAB members' names can be published





Selection of RAB Members

- **If < 20-25 local residents respond, all will be accepted**
- **If > 20-25 respond, a selection panel will nominate RAB members**
 - List of RAB members should represent the diverse interests and points of view throughout the community
 - Members serve voluntarily
 - Navy accepts or rejects the entire list





RAB Selection Panel

- **Made up of 3-4 community leaders**
 - Navy will organize the panel with advice from EPA and EQB
 - *Selection Panel members cannot be on the RAB*
 - Establishes selection criteria and nominates RAB members
 - Selection Panel's job ends when the RAB is formed





Officers of the RAB

- **The RAB is typically led by two Co-Chairs**
 - One is elected to represent the Community members and the second represents the Navy
- **EQB member and EPA member**
 - They will serve as a resource to RAB members, listen to their views, help to facilitate resolutions and ensure standards and regulations are met
- **LRA member at closing bases**
 - Comments on cleanup issues related to planned land use



Role of Community Co-Chair

- **Community Co-Chair is selected by community members. He/She:**
 - Coordinates with the Navy Co-Chair and other RAB members to plan the meetings
 - Ensures that community issues and concerns are expressed to the Navy
 - Helps to get information out to the general public
 - Reports meeting proceedings back to the community





Role of Navy Co-Chair

- **Navy Co-Chair is appointed. He/She:**
 - Coordinates with the Community Co-Chair to plan the meetings
 - Ensures that community concerns are met
 - Provides relevant policies and documents to the RAB
 - Ensures that administrative support is provided for RAB meetings (meeting notices, minutes)
 - Reports meeting proceedings to Navy



Role of RAB Community Members

- **Attend RAB meetings**
 - Participate openly and constructively
 - Regular attendance is critical for a successful RAB
- **Provide suggestions and community input**
 - Will be used by the agencies in making decisions on investigations and cleanup
- **Each member provides advice as an individual**
 - The RAB usually does not vote on issues or make recommendations as a group



Role of RAB Community Members (continued)

- **Promote community awareness**
 - Actively share information with other community members
- **Review and comment on draft final or final documents**
 - Read reports between the meetings and come prepared to discuss them
- **Identify projects for technical assistance (TAPP) funding**
 - A technical adviser may be hired, if necessary, for full community understanding and participation





RAB Training

- **RAB members are given training as needed in their duties and operating procedures**
 - Training will be given during RAB meetings
 - *Collaborative effort by EPA, the Navy, EQB, and the Local Reuse Authority*
 - A nationwide RAB Co-Chair training event is held every few years.
 - *One person from each RAB can attend*





RAB Operating Procedures

- **A charter signed by members sets up:**
 - Policies on attendance
 - Procedures for replacing, adding, or removing members
 - Length of service for Community Co-Chair
 - Methods of resolving disputes
 - Process for incorporating public input



Questions? Comments?



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