



# Report to STAKEHOLDERS

January 2012

Volume 17 No. 1



MARCH



MAY/JULY



SEPTEMBER



NOVEMBER

2011 YEAR-IN-REVIEW

# Changes bring efficiency in more ways than one in 2011

*The changes that occurred in 2011 caused restoration experts and committees to become innovative not only with how money is spent, but also with ways to use technology for cleanup and communication. Those efficiencies are highlighted in this Year-in-Review issue of Report to Stakeholders.*

## RESTORATION PROGRAM

Last year was a year of change for the restoration program. With such change, came cost efficiencies and introduction of new technologies. Restoration program personnel came up with ideas like a mobile lab at Operable Unit (OU) 5/10's Site 231 to cut time; making a new discovery at OU2's Site 29, which led to a \$15 million cost savings; and using submarine communication technology at OUS's Site 25.

Environmental restoration program manager Bruce Oshita said that "using the mobile lab really helps cut down on analysis time. The analyses are done on site, which means we don't have to ship samples to a lab." This method significantly cuts the time in which analytical results are available. Instead of a 2-week wait for a batch of sample results, field personnel can see the data in minutes. Quickly obtaining the analytical results allowed the restoration team to adjust soil gas sample locations based on detected contaminant concentrations. The ability to analyze 150 samples on site made the mobile lab an obvious solution to Oshita.

Clean closure is now the new plan for Site 29. This plan involves removing

all waste, and recycling as much of it as possible. The estimated cleanup cost is now about \$3 million and will allow almost any type of future use at the site. Originally, the project was estimated to cost about \$18 million and the plans were approved to contain waste in place, cap the surface with soil, and install concrete stormwater flow diversion channels, implement land-use controls and monitor it until the waste no longer posed a threat to human health or the environment. After removing surface debris in 2008 and 2009 and discovering the volume was much less than estimated, workers took a closer look at Site 29, a former 38-acre landfill and decided on a new approach of clean closure. "Clean closure is more beneficial to the environment and much more cost effective," said Rebecca Hobbs, program manager for the area.

At Site 25, submarine communication technology was used to identify the zones of greatest fracture density and therefore the best place to drill monitoring wells. The intent was to use the radio waves from the U.S. Navy's submarine communication system, known as very long frequency waves, or VLF, to identify the best places to find groundwater. Restoration staff used the



**SITE 25** — Restoration program workers conduct a water-level measurement.

VLF waves to find the water-bearing fractures by detecting the interaction between the fractures and the VLF fields to identify the highly fractured zone indicative of higher groundwater flow. The electromagnetic fields are broadcast from some of the largest radio transmitters on Earth, operated by the Navy. The transmitters broadcast from several locations including Jim's Creek near Seattle, Wash.; Cutler, Maine; Aquada, Puerto Rico and Lualuae, Hawaii. The Navy uses them to transmit one-way messages to underwater submarines.

## RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD

Italy and Greece aren't the only countries watching their wallets. Edwards Air Force Base saw budget reductions throughout its ranks as the United States tightened government purse strings in 2011. One of the programs hit was the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), a group that fosters open communication between the public and those responsible for environmental cleanup at the base.

Environmental restoration chief, Ai Duong, broke the news

to board members at the Feb. 17 meeting in Mojave, Calif. With a 50-percent reduction in funds, the Air Force was unable to continue the level of support previously provided to the RAB. An unavoidable change was the reduction in formal meetings from quarterly to twice per year. In lieu of the reduced formal meeting frequency, base officials proposed several alternatives to the board, including: moving RAB meeting locations to the base for working-group sessions, meeting at a restaurant for informal



**RAB PUBLIC CO-CHAIR** — North Edwards representative Bruce Davies was selected as the public co-chair in July... just one of the many changes the RAB has gone through in 2011.

dinner discussions, video conferencing and the use of social media for information exchange.

While board members agreed to a reduction in formal meetings and the use of social media, many were opposed to electronic-only distribution of the *Report to Stakeholders (RTS)*. Public representatives stressed that hard copies of the newsletter were one of the best communication methods for informing their communities about the base's cleanup program. "The *RTS* is a valuable tool for getting the word out," South Base representative Brenda Weems-Hunter said at the February meeting. In response to the board's concerns, the Air Force budgeted to continue distributing hard copies of the *RTS* in fiscal year 2012.

In June, board members met at Edwards for an informal working-group session to iron out changes to the RAB charter and bylaws. Changes were made to address the reduction in formal meetings and the support of a Facebook site by the Air Force. Because not all members were present, the board chose to obtain final approval on the proposed changes through e-mail. The RAB charter and bylaws were finalized at the end of July and signed into effect at the Nov. 17 meeting in Lancaster, Calif.

The public representatives who attended the June 16 session moved to select a new co-chair by requesting nominations and voting via e-mail. By doing so, all public representatives were given an opportunity to participate in the co-chair selection. North Edwards representative, Bruce Davies, was named the new public co-chair on July 25. Davies replaced former co-chair and Lancaster primary representative Peter Zorba, who relocated to Pasadena, Calif. New member Jocelyn Swain took over Zorba's duties as primary representative for Lancaster.

The launch of the RAB Facebook site occurred on Aug. 1. Three training sessions were offered to board members to help familiarize them with the social media forum. Later in August, new Air Force co-chair Col. Amy Arwood and Rosamond primary public representative Bill Gaddis toured South Base and Site 25 to learn more about the base's cleanup activities. Gaddis requested the tour to see firsthand the cleanup sites presented at the RAB's formal meetings.

At the Nov. 17 meeting, the board proposed to create a communications plan that would address efforts to maintain open communication despite a reduction in face-to-face meetings. In addition, the Air Force plans to create flyers to advertise RAB vacancies in corresponding communities. Previous advertisements through the local newspaper, NASA Dryden newsletter and basewide e-mail announcements failed to generate any applicants. Anyone who is 18 years or older and works or lives in the base-housing area, Air Base Wing, NASA Dryden and North Base is encouraged to apply to be a public representative.

Board members expect to meet again formally on May 17, 2012, in California City and attend an informal working-group session in early February. To learn more about the RAB, visit [www.facebook.com/RAB.Edwards](http://www.facebook.com/RAB.Edwards). Local residents can contact their community representative by accessing the contact information on the back of this newsletter.

# Report to STAKEHOLDERS

*Report to Stakeholders* is a publication of Edwards Air Force Base, 95th Air Base Wing, Civil Engineer Division, Environmental Management. Its purpose is to inform and educate the public, base workers and residents about continuing environmental efforts on base. It currently has a circulation of 6,000, including about 2,000 subscribers.

Contents of the *Report to Stakeholders* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

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Any comments or questions about the contents of the *Report to Stakeholders* may be directed to: Gary Hatch, 95 ABW/PAI, 305 E. Popson Ave., Edwards AFB, CA 93524, (661) 277-8707.

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Col. Gregory E. Schwab

**Base Civil Engineer**  
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**Chief of Environmental Management**  
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Ai Duong

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## WHAT'S ON THE COVER?



There were four issues of *Report to Stakeholders* in 2011. The pictures on the front cover were on one of those four issues. From top left to bottom right, was March, May/July, September, and November.

# Where to find more INFORMATION



Published data and documents relating to Environmental Management are available for public review at three information repositories. They are updated when new documents are released. Here is a list of our current information repositories:

## Edwards Air Force Base Library

5 W. Yeager Blvd.  
Edwards AFB, Calif.  
(661) 275-2665

Hours of operation: Mon–Thu 9:30 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Fri 9:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
Sat–Sun 10:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.

## Kern County Public Library

**Wanda Kirk Branch**  
3611 Rosamond Blvd.  
Rosamond, Calif.  
(661) 256-3236

Hours of operation: Wed 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Fri–Sat 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

## Los Angeles County Public Library

601 W. Lancaster Blvd.  
Lancaster, Calif.  
(661) 948-5029

Hours of operation: Mon–Wed 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.  
Thu–Fri 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Sat 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

For questions about information in the repositories, you may contact Gary Hatch, Public Affairs chief of Current Operations, at (661) 277-4127 or by e-mail at [95abw.pae@edwards.af.mil](mailto:95abw.pae@edwards.af.mil).

For general information about Edwards or other documents of public interest, you may visit the following links:

[www.edwards.af.mil/library/environment](http://www.edwards.af.mil/library/environment)  
[www.facebook.com/RAB.Edwards](http://www.facebook.com/RAB.Edwards)

# Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Information

The RAB is made up of appointed representatives from communities in and around Edwards Air Force Base, regulators from federal and state agencies and base officials. The board's purpose is to provide a forum for two-way communication among base restoration officials, regulators and the community representatives regarding the cleanup of contamination from past military activities.

The board meets formally, twice a year, rotating meeting locations in communities surrounding the base. The public is welcome to attend. Those who have ques-

tions or concerns about cleanup activities at Edwards may contact any RAB member or Gary Hatch, Public Affairs chief of Current Operations, at (661) 277-8707.

## NEXT QUARTERLY MEETING

Date: May 2012

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Location: City TBD

Venue to be determined

## RAB Members

### OFF-BASE COMMUNITIES

#### Boron

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#### California City

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[mcrist@cityoflancasterca.org](mailto:mcrist@cityoflancasterca.org)

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#### North Edwards

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#### Rosamond

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ALTERNATE: Leslie Uhazy (661) 256-8209 Home  
[luhazy@avc.edu](mailto:luhazy@avc.edu) (661) 722-6417 Work

### ON-BASE COMMUNITIES

#### Housing

Vacant

#### Main Base Air Base Wing

Vacant

#### Main Base Test Wing

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#### NASA Dryden

Vacant

#### North Base

Vacant

#### South Base

Brenda Weems-Hunter (661) 275-0456 Work  
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#### AF Research Laboratory and Propulsion

##### Directorate

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## Remedial Project Managers

### California Department of Toxic Substances

#### Control

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### Edwards AFB

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### Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control

#### Board

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### Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control

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