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FEASIBILITY STUDY/PROPOSED PLAN PUBLIC MEETING
GROVELAND WELLS NOS. 1 AND 2
JULY 9, 1991

I. INTRODUCTION

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducted a public information meeting on the Feasibility Study and Proposed Plan for the Groveland Wells Nos. 1 and 2 Site on the evening of July 9, 1991. The meeting was held at the Groveland Town Hall. Presentations began at 7:35 pm and ended at 9:35 pm. A copy of the agenda is attached. Thirty-five people, including three from EPA, three from NUS Corporation (NUS), and three from the State, attended. Two were representatives of the press.

EPA personnel attending included: Robert Leger, the Remedial Project Manager for the Groveland Well Nos. 1 and 2 Site; Richard Cavagnero, the Massachusetts Superfund Section Chief; and Richard Willey, Hydrogeologist. The State was represented by Jay Naparstek and Charles Tuttle of the DEP and Bill Strohsnitter of the Department of Public Health. James Forrelli, Project Manager; Betsy Horne, Community Relations Specialist; and Carol Finkelstein represented NUS, EPA's contractor for the Groveland Wells site.

II. SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS

Richard Cavagnero (EPA) began the meeting by introducing himself and asking that questions be held until the end of the presentations. He stated that this was the second of three meetings scheduled to discuss site remediation and that EPA would be back on July 31, 1991, to gather oral comments on the Proposed Plan at a public hearing. The purpose of tonight's meeting was both to discuss the Feasibility Study (FS) alternatives and the preferred alternative, as outlined in the Proposed Plan.

Bob Leger (EPA) followed by briefly describing the history of the site and summarizing the status of activity at the other potential sources of contamination in the area: Valley Manufactured Products Company, Inc., A. W. Chesterton Company, Inc. and the former Haverhill Municipal Landfill. He outlined the results of the Remedial Investigation and discussed the cleanup objectives of the FS.

James Forrelli (NUS) discussed the remedial alternatives screening and selection process and compared and contrasted the six alternatives selected for detailed evaluation in the FS. He also showed an overhead with the estimated costs for implementing each of the six alternatives.

Bob Leger indicated that the costs for Alternatives 3 through 6, as shown in the Proposed Plan, had increased by $300,000 based on a recommendation by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that surface water and sediment sampling be conducted. A notice of the increase will be forwarded to those on the mailing list later in the week.

Bob Leger discussed the first seven of nine criteria EPA uses to select its preferred alternative and asked Jay Naparstek to discuss the State's position (criterion #8). Naparstek said the State agrees with the general approach of the preferred alternative but wants more specific information, including an assessment of community acceptance (criterion #9), before it forwards its letter of concurrence. Mr. Leger then discussed the major points of the preferred alternative.

Richard Cavagnero concluded the presentation by identifying the locations of the information repositories, specifying the dates of the public comment period, the public hearing and the ROD signing (by the end of September 1991).

III. COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

All responses were made by the EPA RPM, Robert Leger, unless otherwise indicated.

Liability and Costs

COMMENT: The $8.3 million cost EPA is proposing is high, particularly when the Town of Groveland has a potable water supply. Why not let the groundwater clean itself up? Who is going to pay for this remedy? The Town of Groveland and its residents cannot afford to foot the bill. Has EPA looked at a more economical and practical alternative that features a low maintenance option with institutional controls?

RESPONSE: Richard Cavagnero responded that once the ROD is signed EPA will begin negotiations with the PRPs. If that fails, EPA has two choices: it can institute a suit against the PRPs or it can use money from the trust fund to pay for the cleanup. EPA must also include in its selection process protection of the environment (not just the public) which is why natural attenuation is not a viable option. J. Forrelli suggested that natural attenuation would take over 50 years.

COMMENT: The problems at this site have been known for over 10 years. Can't Groveland be placed at the front of the line for Fund money?

RESPONSE: Richard Cavagnero stated that EPA will look to negotiations and enforcement before seeking money from the trust fund since Region I must compete with sites across the country to make a site a 'Fund-lead' site.

Other Sources of Contamination

COMMENT: Is the Haverhill Landfill impacting the northern end of the plume?

RESPONSE: Only 3 or 4 wells were sampled in the area of the Haverhill Landfill. Some metals and semi-volatiles were discovered but it doesn't appear that the Landfill contributed to the pollution at either Station No. 1 or Station No. 2.

COMMENT: If the Haverhill Landfill isn't cleaned up, is it likely that the area around Station No. 2 will be cleaned up?

RESPONSE: Most of the contamination around Station No. 2 is different from the type of contamination discovered near the Landfill.

Extraction Wells

COMMENT: Will the extraction wells create a new hydrogeological influence such that they will draw contaminated groundwater from the Haverhill Landfill toward the existing plume?

RESPONSE: That is an interesting question. You may want to make it part of the official record through either oral or written comment during the public comment period.

COMMENT: How will the locations of the extraction wells be determined? Will EPA take anyone's land by eminent domain?

RESPONSE: Jim Forrelli stated that a groundwater flow model determined preliminarily that six wells would be needed based on capture zone definitions. It also defined conceptual locations for the wells. Rich Cavagnero stated that permission to drill these wells would be obtained from land owners through access agreements similar to the procedure used to drill wells during the Remedial Investigation.

COMMENT: Did EPA evaluate focusing its extraction well efforts in the plume where the contamination is highest, down near Mill Pond?

RESPONSE: Jim Forrelli used a diagram of a cross section of the plume to explain that the Valley ROD would concentrate on this area of contamination. However, the groundwater flow model suggested that one of the extraction wells would be located near the Mill Pond area and that it would have the highest pumping rate of the extraction wells. Since the plume is moving, EPA also has to address its outlying sections.

Treatment Plant

COMMENT: About how large an area would the proposed treatment plant take up? How will EPA deal with aesthetics, noise, security, property values and ownership issues?

RESPONSE: Jim Forrelli stated he expected the physical plant would take up about an acre. Underground piping would bring the extracted water to the plant. EPA doesn't have specifics yet but the most likely location for the plant is just east of Station No. 2, land that is owned by the Town. Dick Willey said that a similar plant at a site in Maine was about the size of a barn, is surrounded by a cyclone fence and that no odor or noise issues have been raised. Jay Naparstek said that the State has found that cleaning up groundwater has increased property values.

COMMENT: Will EPA bring pictures of the Maine facility to the public hearing?

RESPONSE: Yes.

COMMENT: Will EPA know more about the location of the treatment plant by the public hearing?

RESPONSE: No. You may want to put that concern on the public record.

COMMENT: Will EPA build a backup treatment system in case something goes wrong?

RESPONSE: Operation and maintenance costs are built into the cost estimates. If something serious should go wrong, however, the system would be shut down for repair.

Water Supply

COMMENT: Instead of spending all this money, why not just dig another water supply well.

RESPONSE: A member of the Well Committee stated that other potential well locations have been studied throughout the Town but none have proven suitable. There is, however, currently a safe, adequate supply of potable water.

COMMENT: If EPA chooses Alternative 6, is it their intention to let Station No. 2 come back in service at the end of 30 years?

RESPONSE: The purpose of the remediation is not to restore Station No. 2 to service. Its goal is to cleanup the contaminated groundwater. The Town itself, however, may chose to bring Station No. 2 back into service in the future.

COMMENT: Shouldn't Groveland have as its highest priority protecting Station No. 1?

RESPONSE: The Well Committee decided to decrease the pumping rate at Station No. 1 to assure the plume would not be drawn to it.

Timing of Cleanup Schedule

COMMENT: Once the ROD is signed, when does actual work begin?

RESPONSE: Richard Cavagnero stated that the ROD is blind as far as who pays for its implementation. Design will not begin until after negotiations have been conducted or, that failing, EPA decides to sue the PRPs or compete for trust fund money. EPA expects to complete negotiations with the PRPs and begin design work in fiscal year 1992. So the earliest design could start is 1 1/2 years from today and actual work could start 1 1/2 years after that.

The Plume

COMMENT: Where will the plume be by then?

RESPONSE: Natural groundwater flow is about one foot per day.

COMMENT: Is the Mill Pond system not currently capturing the entire plume?

RESPONSE: No, it is not.

COMMENT: Won't the concentrated area of the plume spread out as it travels closer to the Merrimack River?

RESPONSE: Dick Willey stated that the concentrated area would be expected to move downgradient but that it will lengthen and spread out as it does.

COMMENT: Could water from the Merrimack River be used to dilute the plume such that its concentrations fall below 5 ppm?

RESPONSE: Reinjection could force the plume to move toward Station No. 1.

COMMENT: What happened to the pollution at Station No. 1?

RESPONSE: The pump test showed that the most likely source of contamination was the plume coming from the Mill Pond area. Since 1979, hydraulic conditions have changed, thereby altering the plume's configuration.

COMMENT: Is 75 acres the area of the plume itself?

RESPONSE: Yes, and 850 acres is the area of the entire NPL site.

EPA COMMITMENTS

1. EPA will hold a public hearing for oral comment on the FS and Proposed Plan on July 31, 1991.

2. EPA will bring pictures and other information it has on the Maine site to the public hearing.

3. EPA stated that a ROD would be signed by the end of September 1991.

V. APPENDIX

A copy each of the Proposed Plan, the agenda and the sign-in sheet is enclosed.