



# Environmental Action UPDATE

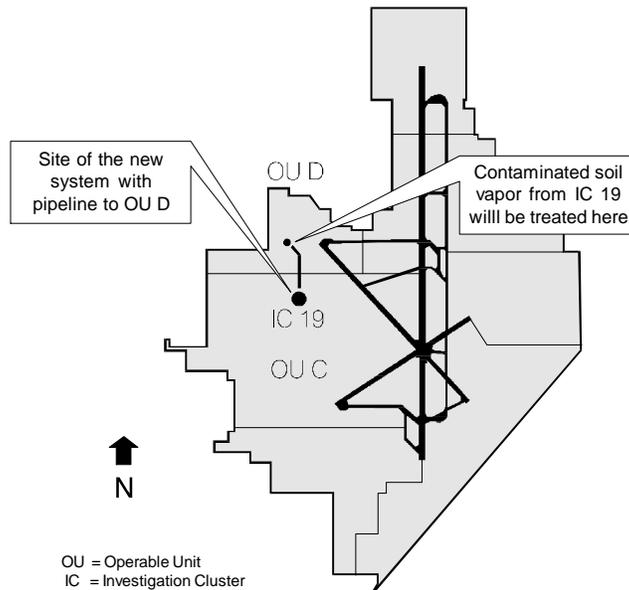
A Quarterly Newsletter about the McClellan AFB Restoration Program

October 1996

## IC 19 Soil Vapor Extraction System Proposed

McClellan AFB proposes to conduct a removal action at Investigation Cluster 19 (IC 19) in Operable Unit C to remove high concentrations of contaminants from the soil. The removal action, called soil vapor extraction, or SVE, will be conducted under the plug-in *SVE Engineering Evaluation/ Cost Analysis (EE/CA)*. The EE/CA is a process for undertaking removal actions quickly.

At IC 19, four old disposal pits have leaked solvents and fuel compounds into the ground and to the groundwater. About 13,000 pounds of combined fuel and solvent contamination are estimated to be in the ground beneath IC 19. The SVE will vacuum out the contaminants and help prevent further contamination of the groundwater. Soil vapor extraction has already proven to be very effective at several sites at



OU = Operable Unit  
IC = Investigation Cluster

McClellan AFB

***McClellan AFB is reusing equipment from other sites on base to continue to make the most cost-effective use of them.***

McClellan AFB. Once the contaminants have been removed from the ground, they can be treated or destroyed.

Instead of purchasing new equipment to install at IC 19, McClellan AFB engineers are reusing equipment from another site. Contaminant concentrations in OU D have decreased enough that the system there can be scaled back. One of the OU D SVE system's powerful vacuums will be disconnected and

reused at IC 19, about a half mile away. The contaminated soil vapor extracted at IC 19 will then be piped back to OU D to be treated. This equipment exchange allows the base to maximize equipment use and save money.

A Public Comment period for the IC 19 EE/CA is taking place from September 12 to October 12, 1996. The site specific EE/CA document is available for review at the Information Repository, located at the Rio Linda/Elverta Community Center, or at the McClellan AFB Administrative Record.

### On the Inside

Treatment Plant Reopens	2
Sewer Release into Beaver Pond	3
Public Scoping Meeting	3
Inspection Results	4
RABSpotlight: Elaine Anderson	5



## Treatment Plant Reopens Following Shutdown

The base's Groundwater Treatment Plant (GWTP) became operational again on September 13 after it was shut down on September 5. The shutdown took place following discharge of contaminated water to Magpie Creek from the GWTP. There was no immediate threat to human health or the environment from the release.

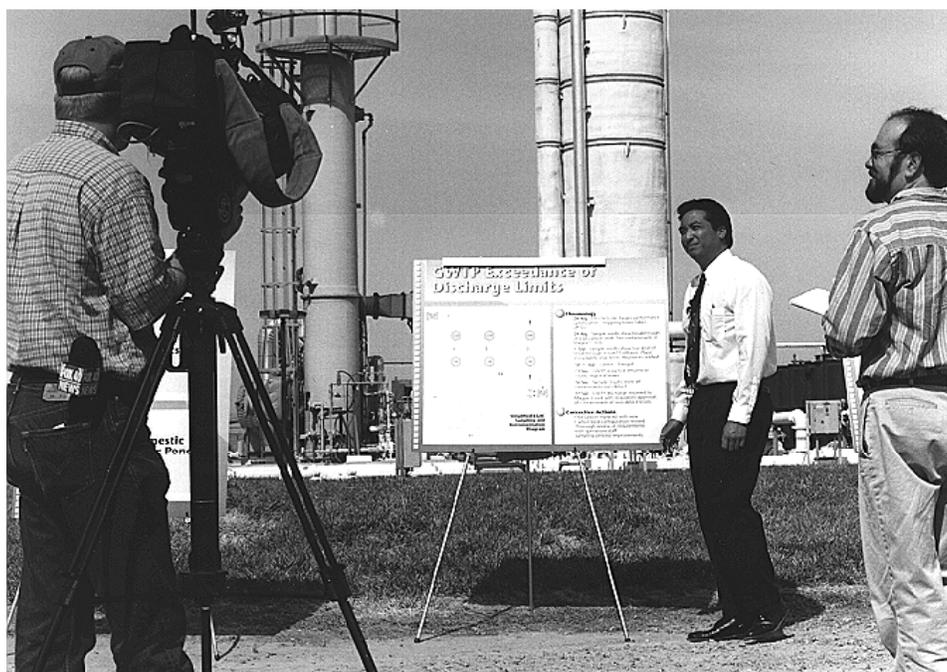
The September 5 discovery occurred when sampling results from September 3 showed the contamination breaking through carbon units at the GWTP. About 1 million gallons of water a day are treated and discharged to the creek and Beaver Pond. Between September 3 and September 5, about 2 million gallons containing contamination were released. "The amount of contaminant in the released water was equivalent to approximately two ounces of liquid," according to Bob Shirley, restoration engineer for Environmental Management.

Shirley said that the water leaving the carbon bed filters from the plant was tested and the contaminant levels were slightly higher than federal drinking water standards of five parts per billion (ppb) for trichloroethene (TCE). The water tested as it left the carbon bed was at seven ppb.

Members of the California State Environmental Protection Agency's Regional Water Quality Control Board and Department of Toxic Substances Control, along with the U.S. EPA, were promptly notified. After stating that the discharge violated McClellan's

Interim Record of Decision (IROD) limitations for the GWTP, RWQCB issued a Notice of Violation.

McClellan AFB responded with a Technical Report that identified three findings that caused the discharge to occur. Two of the findings identified "miscommuni-



*The Base invited media to the GWTP to discuss two separate incidents that occurred within the same week (see Beaver Pond article on page 3, for the second incident). Kevin Wong, EM's Project Manager for GWTP operations, is shown here briefing media representatives.*

cation" between 1) contractors, and 2) McClellan Environmental staff. The third finding was that the carbon originally in the vessels was not replaced with new carbon prior to start-up.

The corrective actions McClellan took included changing the granular activated carbon that filters out the contaminants in each of the six carbon treatment units and sampling the carbon beds twice a week as required in the August 1996 work implementation plan. 

# Sewer Release into Beaver Pond



*Volunteers last April helped clean debris out of Beaver Pond. The sewage spill has not harmed wildlife in or around the pond.*

On September 10, a base employee notified EM of a sewage-like odor at the Beaver Pond located on the west side of McClellan AFB. EM personnel investigated the incident and discovered that sewage was being released into the pond. EM immediately stopped the flow, notified the regulatory agencies, and surveyed the pond for environmental impact.

EM's investigation of this incident revealed that during routine maintenance of valves on base, several valves were inadvertently left open which allowed sewage to flow to the pond via an inactive reclaimed water pipeline. The discharge was from McClellan's sewage connection and was not released off base. The non-sewer pipe has been flushed clean and the rinse water sent to the County Regional Sewer System under an existing discharge permit.

Ongoing inspections at the pond indicate no adverse ecological impacts. To prevent this from occurring again, locks have been placed on the valves, the valves have been labeled, and the pipeline is being reconfigured to prevent future sewage flow into Beaver Pond.

## Opportunity for Community Input Public Scoping Meeting Next Month

A Public Scoping Meeting will be held on November 14, 1996, at the North Highlands Community Center. The meeting is an opportunity for the public to comment on the scope of the Disposal and Reuse Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will be prepared next year. An EIS is conducted during the closure and reuse process to assess the environmental impact of reuse of McClellan AFB property.

Some items that may be of concern to the community are job retention and future employment opportunities with reuse; exposure to contamination from past and future industrial users; wetlands on base; water supplies and other utility systems; traffic and air pollution concerns; and reuse potential of various facilities on base.

The purpose of the Public Scoping Meeting is to gather input from the community and regulatory agencies about the scope of relevant issues such as these to be addressed in the EIS and to identify potentially significant issues to be analyzed in depth.

## Upcoming Meetings

### October

- 3 RAB Relative Risk Committee meeting, 6:00 p.m., Building 269D Conference Room, McClellan AFB
- 23 RAB General Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Vineland Elementary School, 6450 20th Avenue, Rio Linda

### November

- 6 Environmental Compliance Forum, 6:00 p.m., Officers Club, McClellan AFB
- 14 Public Scoping Meeting for the Environmental Impact Statement, 7:00 p.m., North Highlands Community Center, 6040 Watt Avenue, Sacramento

### December

- 5 RAB Executive Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Building 269D Conference Room, McClellan AFB

# Conversion from CatOx to GAC for IC 1

McClellan operated a Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) system at Investigation Cluster (IC) 1 that used catalytic oxidation (CatOx) to destroy volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from March through December 1995. Approximately 4,000 pounds of VOCs were removed and destroyed from the soil in that time frame. (See the July issue of this newsletter for more information on SVE systems and how they work.)

By December 1995, enough VOCs had been removed to warrant a "rebound" study. That study required the system to be shut off and soil monitored to see if contaminant levels would rise again (or "rebound"). Environmental Management personnel also suspected it might be more cost effective to switch from the CatOx to a granular activated carbon (GAC) system, and the rebound study would provide the data for that decision. So, the SVE system was shut off on December 2, 1995.



*The shiny units on the left are granular activated carbon (GAC) tanks used to treat contaminated soil vapor extracted at IC 1. They replace the CatOx unit, which was moved to OU D. The two large tanks on the right are groundwater holding tanks. They feed contaminated groundwater into the groundwater GAC tanks, which are the smaller dark units in the foreground.*

## Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Volunteer Membership Recruitment Effort

The McClellan AFB Restoration Advisory Board is looking for community members or other interested parties to serve as RAB alternate member volunteers. Future vacancies on the RAB will be filled from the pool of alternate members. Community RAB members provide input on activities that assist base personnel and regulatory agencies in the cleanup at McClellan AFB. Interested persons should be affiliated with or members of other community groups to share information about McClellan's cleanup program. For more information contact:

Jamie Cameron-Harley  
RAB Coordinator  
McClellan AFB  
643-1742 Ext. 352

By April 1996, results of the rebound study showed that contaminant levels had only risen moderately and that conversion of the SVE treatment from CatOx to GAC would be more cost effective. Two 3,000-pound GAC vessels were purchased and one of the blowers previously used at OU D were assembled together. The old CatOx system was moved over to OU D for use there.

The SVE system at IC 1 was turned on with the new GAC system in September. Unlike other SVE systems planned in the near future, IC 1 is also plumbed with a groundwater extraction system. It will be operated until vapor extraction/capture is no longer practical. This replacement of off-gas treatment is part of McClellan's strategy of matching soil cleanup technology to the cleanup tasks. 



## Environmental Action UPDATE

October 1996

The *Environmental Action Update* is a publication of the Environmental Public Affairs Office at McClellan AFB, Calif., designed to keep the public informed of environmental activities at the base. For questions, comments, or to be added to the mailing list, please write to SM-ALC/PAE, 5050 Dudley Blvd., Suite 3, McClellan AFB, CA 95625-1389 or phone (916) 643-1742, ext. 354.

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# RAB SPOTLIGHT



One certainty in life is change, and McClellan is no exception. As the Installation Restoration Program continues to make progress, the Environmental Restoration Division said goodbye in September to Mario Ierardi as the division chief and RAB DoD Co-Chair, and welcomed Elaine Anderson in those roles.



*Elaine Anderson will take over as RAB Co-Chair for Mario Ierardi.*

Ms. Anderson has been involved with the cleanup for six years, served as the alternate Remedial Program Manager for three years, and stepped into the RPM role when Kirk Schmalz left in May 1996. She is intimately familiar with every aspect and detail of the IRP.

As RAB DoD Co-Chair, Ms. Anderson sees the main focus for the next six months as incorporating the

RAB's input into the reuse and cleanup strategy. "We all need to understand the strategy, where we're headed and how cleanup will be accomplished over the next years, to make sure that we're addressing the community concerns through closure," Anderson said.

"What I'd really like to see with the RAB in the future is the community members becoming knowledgeable enough about the cleanup program to take the lead on where they want to focus," Anderson commented.

"To date, the community RAB voice has been very instrumental in getting funding support for our program. The Air Force is evaluating its entire program to determine where funding should be applied. When not only the base, but also the regulators and the community members supporting the requirements and the need to fund them, it lends a lot of validity to the program. (The RAB) has been of critical help in getting McClellan's program validated within the AF," according to Anderson.

"This allows us to spend more of our time cleaning up the base, and less of our time justifying our requirements." 

## Suggested Reading

The Suggested Reading section will tell you about reports that have been recently produced and are available for your review.

**1996 Management Action Plan.** The MAP gives a comprehensive snapshot of the status of the restoration program, what's known about the contamination, and plans for the future. The 1996 MAP was released in January.

**1996 Community Relations Plan.** The CRP outlines the program for fostering two-way communication between McClellan and the public. It also gives histories of community relations activities and of the restoration program as a whole.

Both documents are available through the Administrative Record on base and at the Information Repository at the Rio Linda Community Center.

Also, the MAP is available over the Internet. Set your Web browser (such as Netscape, Microsoft Explorer, or the web browser from America Online) to:

<http://www.mcclellan.af.mil>

This is the McClellan AFB home page. Click on McClellan AFB Organizational Pages, then on Environmental Management. This will bring you to the Environmental Management home page. Click on Management Action Plan. From here, you can either read or download the entire document!

And keep your mouse pointed toward our home page. Soon, the *Community Relations Plan* and the new *BRAC Cleanup Plan* will be available online too. 

# Meeting Announcements

See also Upcoming Meetings on page 3.

## November 6, 1996

Environmental Compliance Forum  
6:00 p.m.  
Officers Club  
McClellan AFB

## November 14, 1996

Public Scoping Meeting for the  
Environmental Impact Statement  
7:00 p.m.  
North Highlands Community Center  
6040 Watt Avenue, Sacramento

## Environmental Management Remedial Scoreboard

As of: **September 1, 1996**

Pounds of Contamination Removed  
from Soil and Water:

471,000

IP0110-96.PM6 - 10/08/96 - LCT - SAC

### Environmental Action

## UPDATE

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