



Environmental Action **UPDATE**

A Quarterly Newsletter About Environmental Activities at McClellan, California

December 2001

Air Force and State Regulators Resolve Formal Dispute

The Air Force and the State of California came to an agreement in November on the formal dispute over the **volatile organic compounds (VOCs)** in groundwater under McClellan. The Air Force and the State agreed that McClellan's VOC Record of Decision will state 5 parts per billion (ppb) as the cleanup standard for trichloroethylene (TCE). Once the plume reaches that cleanup level, the Air Force will consider cleaning up to an even lower level of 2.3 ppb if doing so is determined to be technologically and economically feasible.

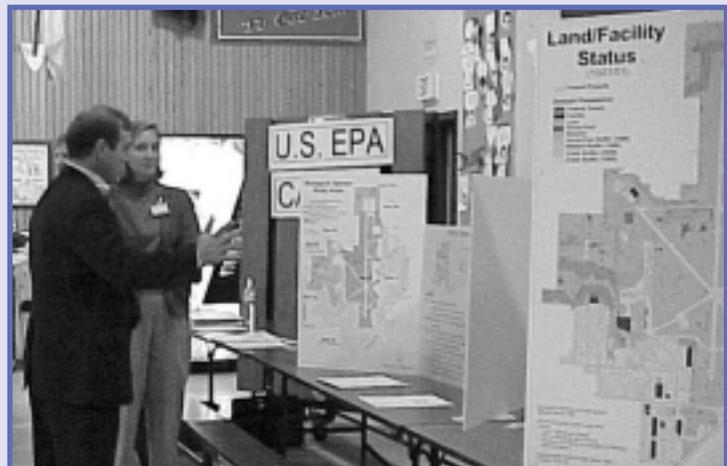
Prior to the November agreement, both parties had agreed to enter a formal dispute resolution process to determine the cleanup level for VOCs in groundwater; the Air Force and the State had not been able to reach consensus on whether the cleanup standard should be based on the federal **maximum contaminant level** or state **water quality objective**. The issue in dispute was the recognition and interpretation of a State requirement. The Air Force and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) interpreted the requirement to result in a groundwater cleanup level for TCE of 5 ppb. The State interpreted it to require cleanup to 2.3 ppb. Both cleanup levels are protective of human health and the environment.

After not resolving the issue through informal dispute resolution, the formal process established in the 1990 **Interagency Agreement** between the Air Force, the U.S. EPA, and the State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) was utilized. The Interagency Agreement process calls for formation of a Dispute Resolution

Committee and, if necessary, a Senior Executive Committee. At each level of the process, the dispute resolution groups include representatives from each agency. Through this process, the Air Force and the agencies were able to come to an agreement regarding the McClellan VOC cleanup level.

To begin addressing groundwater contamination quickly, the groundwater is currently being treated under an Interim Record of Decision signed in 1995. The cleanup strategy consists of a three-phased approach focusing on containing contamination. In the first phase, additional information was gathered and the highest priority areas of contamination were contained through a pump-and-treat system. In the second phase, the high priority containment was

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Above: Molly Enloe, a wildlife biologist with Parsons, explains the natural resources program at McClellan to a community member.

The public attended an open house poster board session hosted by the Air Force on November 15th. Air Force project managers, technical experts, and federal and State regulators answered questions about McClellan's cleanup program. ■

Air Force and State Regulators Resolve Formal Dispute (Cont.)

Glossary of Terms

Interagency Agreement — An agreement between the State of California, U.S. EPA, and the Air Force to share responsibilities and oversight for the Installation Restoration Program activities at the former McClellan AFB. These agencies ensure that remediation activities implemented at McClellan protect public health and the environment and comply with all applicable State and federal regulations.

Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) — Enforceable federal drinking water standards that have been adopted after public review and comment. MCLs are based on the health effects, treatment technologies, costs, and other feasibility factors.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) — Carbon-containing compounds that evaporate readily at room temperature. VOCs are commonly used in metal plating, electronics manufacture, and metal degreasing.

Water Quality Objective — State-adopted and U.S. EPA-approved standards for water bodies, which cover the water quality criteria (based on specific levels of pollutants) that must be met to protect the water for its designated beneficial use(s). ■

further defined and completed. The regulators have agreed that the Air Force should continue with this effort by beginning the third phase, which includes installing additional extraction wells to further contain and treat contaminated groundwater. The 1999 Five Year Review by U.S. EPA, concurred with by the State of California, states that the current approach and the systems in place are protective of the public.

Now that the dispute process over cleanup levels for groundwater is completed, the Air Force is further defining how the soil and groundwater cleanup will be integrated. A Proposed Plan will be developed that outlines the cleanup strategy leading to a Record of Decision on the final cleanup remedies and cleanup levels for groundwater. Members of the community will have an opportunity to comment on the Proposed Plan before a final remedy is selected. Public meetings and a public comment period will be announced.

Members of the community will receive notification if they are on the McClellan environmental mailing list. Contact the Air Force, U.S. EPA, or DTSC contacts on the back page of the newsletter to be added

to the mailing list or to obtain answers to any questions you may have. ■



Elected Officials Tour CS 10

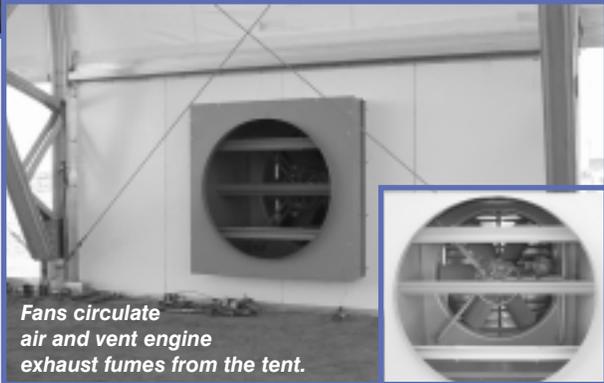
On October 19, State Senator Deborah Ortiz (*above right*) received briefings on the McClellan environmental cleanup program from Paul Brunner, BRAC Environmental Coordinator, and visited many of the cleanup sites, including the Confirmed Site (CS) 10 landfill excavation. Representatives from the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and Regional Water Quality Control Board also participated in the tour.

Sacramento County Supervisor, Roger Dickinson (*below right* with Dave Green, McClellan Radiological Program Manager) was also given a tour of CS 10 on October 25. URS CS 10 Project Managers explained to the visitors how the cleanup will proceed. ■



Going Up

The tent on October 1, prior to the completion of the roof and wall sections



Fans circulate air and vent engine exhaust fumes from the tent.

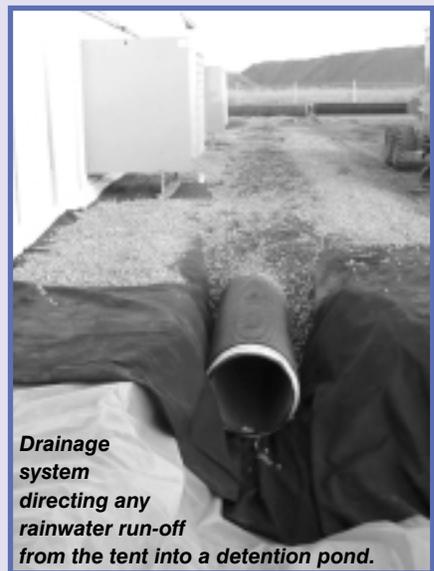
The first phase of the Confirmed Site (CS) 10 work to remove radioactive materials and other contaminants from the inactive landfill is complete. Construction of a weatherization tent to protect the site from wind, rain, and sun will allow workers to remove radioactive material and buried waste in an environmentally controlled atmosphere.

The tent is approximately 66 feet high (5 stories tall), and 205 feet wide by 630 feet long (the length of two football fields). It covers the entire landfill and immediate work area. The tent, anchored to the earth, is designed and constructed to ensure conformance with all applicable local building codes, including earthquake requirements. Designed to withstand the maximum-recorded local wind conditions, the tent had no problems during the recent wind storms.

The tent will be equipped with fans to circulate air and to vent heavy equipment engine exhaust.

Continuous air monitoring (CAM) systems have been working around the perimeter of CS 10 since the discovery of plutonium in September 2000. The plutonium found in September is no longer on the site. Ongoing monitoring has shown no exposure or airborne radioactivity that would affect worker or public safety. The CAM systems will be operated for the entire project duration.

To prevent impact to the surrounding environment, the site has been graded, and a drainage system has been constructed to direct any rainwater run-off into a detention pond. Run-off water samples will be analyzed to ensure no contaminants are present. Sampling following this fall's heavy storms showed no contamination. Nearby groundwater monitoring wells also are sampled on a regular basis.



Drainage system directing any rainwater run-off from the tent into a detention pond.

The final work plan was issued in July 2001, and site

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work began. The goals for the work at CS 10 include the removal of drums and soils contaminated with radioactive material and hazardous wastes. These goals are designed to eliminate the potential human and environmental exposure from contaminants present at the site.

Public Comments Affect Changes at CS 10

A public meeting was held in February 2001 to provide information and to solicit public input on the CS 10 Removal Action Work Plan (RAWP). As a result of public comments provided during the public meeting and public comment period, the following changes were made to the RAWP:

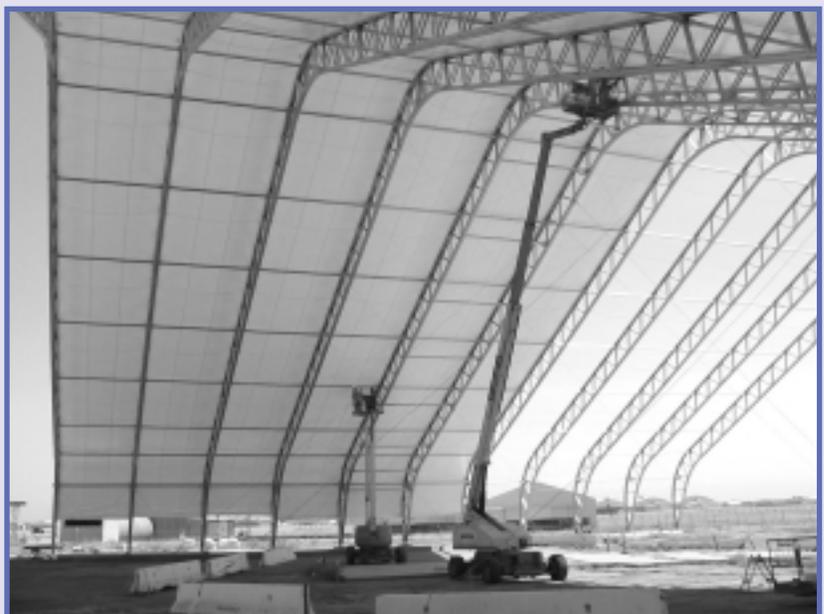
- The radiological contaminants of concern have been expanded to include fission products and uranium.
- The CS 10 Transportation Plan has been revised to include guidance that precludes waste shipments during peak traffic periods.
- The maximum historical wind speed was thoroughly researched to ensure the tent could withstand the local winds.

Formal Air Force responses to all public comments are available for public review in the Final CS 10 Time Critical Removal Action Work Plan. Copies of this document can be found at the Information Repository/ Administrative Record in Building 10, 3411 Olson Street, McClellan (see back page for hours open).

Contractors erected the tent framework using two 120' boom cranes. The 66' tall by 204' wide sections were placed 16' apart. The fabric sheets were installed concurrently to strengthen the structure as it was being assembled.

Emergency Response at CS 10

The Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (SMFD) assumed jurisdiction for emergency response at McClellan Park in April 2001. The CS 10 emergency response work plan has been discussed and coordinated with the SMFD and the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department. These agencies have been briefed on the CS 10 site work and received a walk-through of the entire complex to ensure that they have a working knowledge of the site. The fire and sheriff's departments are fully prepared for any emergency. ■



Completion of Environmental Documents Allows Leasing to Begin

McClellan Air Force Base became McClellan Park on July 13, 2001. Since the Base closed, the primary mission for Air Force officials at McClellan has been to clean up contamination at the Base and transfer the property for reuse. To date, the Air Force has leased 90 percent of the Base's major facilities and nearly half of its land to Sacramento County for reuse.

Several important steps must be accomplished before the property can be transferred. The Environmental Baseline Survey (EBS) defines a property's environmental condition and establishes a baseline the Air Force uses to make decisions regarding property transactions. The EBS is an environmental document; it is reviewed by State and federal regulatory agencies to ensure that the baseline environmental condition of the base is understood. The purpose of the EBS is to identify environmental conditions that can result in land-use restrictions. These conditions include asbestos-containing material, lead-based paint, hazardous materials, underground storage tanks, and McClellan's soil and groundwater cleanup areas.

The EBS guides the Air Force and regulatory agencies in determining whether a parcel can be leased (*Finding of Suitability to Lease [FOSL]*) or transferred (*Finding of Suitability to Transfer [FOST]*). The FOSL or FOST is a real estate document in which the Air Force certifies that the property is environmentally suitable for leasing or deed transfer.

According to Rick Solander, McClellan Air Force Base Conversion Agency Compliance and Reuse Program Manager, "Our goal is to work with Sacramento County to support their reuse effort. We began by turning the environmentally suitable property over to them to market for reuse, even before the Base closed."

The Air Force was able to meet an ambitious timetable that included leasing nearly 1,400 of McClellan's 2,856 acres and over 500 of its 570 major facilities. A streamlined parcel strategy was developed with

Sacramento County, the regulatory agencies, and McClellan Business Park. Solander said, "It was a real team effort where each benefitted. We met every week with the County to chart our progress. The regulatory agencies ensured that protection of public health and the environment was met. With the regulators participating in our streamlined strategy, we used the close coordination to stay on schedule."



Freshly renovated, Grant Union School District now has a training building located at McClellan Park.

compatibility of parcels and the likelihood of being leased quickly. Solander said, "We began leasing property in 1999, and it's been a gradual, but steady, process ever since."

The next step in the reuse process is to continue the cleanup efforts so that the remaining facilities and property can be turned over for reuse and so the entire Base can eventually be conveyed to Sacramento County by deed. The Air Force continues to work cooperatively with the Local Redevelopment Authority, their development partner, and regulatory agencies to make reuse a benefit to all.

Reuse efforts continue at McClellan and have created nearly 4,200 private sector jobs, thus far. ■

The streamlined parcel-based EBS and FOSL strategy involved dividing McClellan into eight main areas, based upon the



The *Environmental Action Update* is a publication of the Air Force Base Conversion Agency (AFBCA) at McClellan, California, 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 AFBCA/DD-McClellan, 3411 Olson Street, McClellan, CA 95652-1071 or phone (916) 643-1742 ext. 233 or 232.

www.afbca.hq.af.mil/mcclellanem/

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**The McClellan Information Repository/
Administrative Record**

**Building 10,
First Floor of the West End,
3411 Olson Street, McClellan**

**8:00 to 3:00 Mon-Thurs
8:00 to 3:00 Every Other Friday**

**For Repository questions or special visit needs,
please call the librarian, Laraine McQuillen, at
(916) 643 1250, ext. 239.**

**Environmental Management
Remedial Scoreboard**

As of September 2001:

1,049,030

Pounds of volatile organic compound
contamination removed from
soil and groundwater.

Emergency Response at McClellan Park

Because of the closure of McClellan Air Force Base, emergency response is now handled by the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District and the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department.

The Air Force will no longer be responsible for handling emergencies that occur on the grounds of the former Air Force Base. Base tenants and community members should dial 9-1-1 for all emergencies.

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