



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Alaska District

FINAL Meeting Minutes Qawalangin (Regional) FUDS RAB Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Subject: Qawalangin (Regional) Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Meeting

Amaknak, Chernofski Harbor Supply and Storage Site, Cape Wislow AWS Station, Fort Learnard, and Ugadaga Bay Station FUDS

Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2024

Time 6:00-8:00 PM

Location: Unalaska Public Library
64 Eleanor St., Unalaska, AK
and Virtually on Zoom

Attendees: **RAB Members Present:**
Elise Contreras (virtual)
Ben Leon-Guerrero (virtual)
Rena B Flint, USACE Co-Chair (virtual)

Denise Rankin (OC/OCE: Meeting Contractor– In-Person Moderator)
Laresa Syverson (OC/OCE: Meeting Contractor – Technology Coordinator)

RAB Members Not Present:

James (Jim) T Paulin
Okalena Patricia Lekanoff Gregory
David M Gregory
Michael Tutiakoff
Alyssa McDonald
Kale Bruner

In person Attendees (17):

Ellis Berry
Thomas Rufous (City of Unalaska)
Andy Lusk (KUCB)
Summer Smith (OC)
Forrest Kranda (USACE)
Kelly Eldridge (USACE)
Sean O'Donnell (USACE)
Nick Lekanoff
Rufina ShaishnikoffEthan Nichols
Ken Reeves
Sofia Stuart-Rasi
Chris Price (Q Tribe)
Jason Westenskow (OCE: Meeting Contractor – Project Manager)
Donna Van Flein (OC/OCE: Meeting Contractor – Meeting Recorder)

Virtual Attendees (18):

Ginny Hatfield (Museum of the Aleutians)
Wendy Hansen (USACE)
Melissa Scully (USACE)
Taylor Borgfeldt (USACE)
Mike MacMillan (USACE)
Sasha Rankin (OC)
Marc Hansmeier (Ahtna)
Jeff Estes (EPA)
Cas Galasso (ADEC)
Sarah Bernhardt (ADEC)
Andy Dietrick (Aleutian Aerial LLC)
Kenneth Andraschko (EPA)
Paola Kennedy
Levi Collins (EA)
Natalie Cale (OC/OCE: Meeting Contractor - Contract Manager)
Karen Pletnikoff (APIA)
Cameron Dean (City of Unalaska)
Travis Swangel



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1. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Moderator Denise Rankin kicked off the meeting with opening remarks and started recording the meeting for note taking purposes.
- b. Roll call conducted.
 - i. 3 members present. There is no quorum.
 - ii. Members agreed to induct Ellis Berry as a Board member without quorum present as it was already agreed to via email.
- c. Meeting Goals and Objectives
 - i. Denise gave an overview of the purpose of the RAB Meeting and introduced OCE as the USACE contractor facilitating the RAB Meetings for USACE.
 - ii. Rena reviewed the agenda.

2. Revise/Adopt November Minutes

- i. Without a quorum, the Board will have to adopt November 2023 and February 2024 minutes at the May 2024 meeting.

Action Item: Add approval of minutes for November and February meetings to the May 2024 agenda.

3. March 1, 2023 RAB Operating Procedures

- i. Rena introduced the topic for an open discussion on meeting frequency. Comments were made that indicated that quarterly meetings were not enough and were packed with a lot of information that more frequent meetings would be better. Rena requests feedback.
- ii. Denise suggested having more meetings or breaking the quarterly meetings up with fewer presentations for more in depth discussions with each of the sites in the RAB. Denise also mentioned the set up of the room in a roundtable style instead of the Council Chambers was very nice and hoped it would promote more free discussion. Denise stated she felt less nervous sitting and talking rather than in front of a mic. Denise opened the discussion to the RAB Board Members on meeting frequency.
- iii. Laresa proposed inviting more non-profit organizations to the meetings to see if they have anything to contribute or learn more. She listed Unalaskans Against Sexual Assault and Family Violence, Museum, Wellness Center, Clinic, Ginny suggested the Visitors Bureau. Denise proposed that maybe we reach out to the High School History class.
- iv. Ben concerned about people's time restrictions that maybe shorter meetings better.
- v. Rufina, an elder in the community stated she didn't know much about the RAB meetings but saw the poster and wanted to learn more. She suggests that they encourage younger people to come. She also talked about the Senior Center Denise suggests reaching out to the High School.
- vi. Elise suggests a hybrid of meetings including the quarterly meetings but have some smaller informal discussion on certain projects.
- vii. Rena stated that monthly meetings in the past were hard to do. Suggests every six weeks.
- viii. Ben believes this meeting is for community and how much they can participate needed for input.



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4. Local Updates/Community Introductions/Public Comment

- i. Rena formally recognized and inducted Ellis Berry as a new RAB Board Member.
- ii. Rena invited anyone interested in the being a member of the RAB Board to contact her to receive an application. Suggests Thomas apply.
- iii. Rena introduced Taylor Borgfeldt as the new Project Manager and Co-chair of the RAB. Taylor introduces herself and is excited to work on the RAB and with the group. Melissa Scully introduced herself as the technical lead for the Amaknak FUDS Property.
- iv. Karen Pletnikoff with Aleutian Pribilof Island Association (APIA) introduced herself. She stated she is not a board member but makes most board meetings to stay up to date for APIA of what is going on in the region and advocate for sites that do not have a nearby tribe.
- v. Natalie Cale asked if Rena could explain what the RAB Board member position entails to help people decide if they would like to become a board member. Rena replied that she could send out the membership form along with the Operating Procedures. Attendance and participation in meetings and advising remedies of cleanup of FUDS. The position will also review documents, as much or as little as you want, but number one is being there and speaking at the meetings. Elise added it was a great way to stay informed and involved with the FUDS cleanup. Ben added that it is important to know what is being cleaned up and advise on areas that hold more weight. Rena added another aspect is being a conduit to the community to give information.
- vi. Sean O'Donnell was introduced as the new tribal liaison for the Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District. He is new to the job and is just learning at all the advisory meetings he attends throughout the state. His job is to help answer questions and navigate program areas to be a better resource in the community.
- vii. Cas Galasso of ADEC announced her transition out of her role, and introduced Sarah Bernhardt, who will be taking over on the active contaminated sites in the area.
- viii. Donna Van Flein mentioned that there are comment cards for those not comfortable asking questions to the group. They will be read and addressed later in the meeting.
- ix. Natalie Cale states that she is encouraged that cleanup has become not only a community issue, but USACE, EPA and Sen. Murkowski priority. The Tribe, City, OC, ADEC, USACE are working together to get a game plan to focus on areas to cleanup in an organized way. Creating a bigger picture for cleanup efforts. The community may add their priority, housing, recreation, etc. Natalie brought attention to all the funding that is available, especially the grants. She pointed out how all parties with grants are meeting so that everyone can put the money to good use on the island to get the areas cleaned up.
- x. Jeff Estes with EPA is interested in what the greater community's interests are to maximize the funds that EPA has to offer. He is also available for questions for anyone who needs help.
- xi. Marc Hansmeier is an engineer with Ahtna and is new to the RAB meeting.
- xii. Sarah Bernhardt with Alaska DEC is looking forward to working with everyone. Agreed that she will miss Cas at ADEC, but we will do our best to fill her shoes, and that her email is sarah.bernhardt@alaska.gov if anyone needed to contact her.
- xiii. Ken Andraschko is the EPA contaminated ANCSA Lands Program Coordinator. He pointed out all the funds that are available, like the Community Change Grants. He said



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please reach out if you need help and he will help find opportunities for the community.

- xiv. Karen Pletnikoff wanted to point out that along with all the other grants available there is also the Environmental Justice fund available as well. These could be sites impacted by climate change.
- xv. Thomas Roufos added Fire fighters local chapter would be another non-profit organization to invite to the RAB meetings.

5. City of Unalaska Brownfields Advisory Board Update

- a. Thomas Roufos is the Associate Planner for the City of Unalaska. He is giving the Assessment Grant update. They have finished Phase 1 of site visits, and that report should be available to the community in a month or two. Strawberry Hill is the first to be completed, then Pyramid Valley. All of this will be available on the City's website on a brownfields page under the planning section. He also mentioned they should have for the next meeting an inventory of sites and resources in the community and brownfields areas of interest. The city is working on the portal and dashboard so the community can access it. Thomas concurred that it is beneficial having this Brownfields group to work together and not duplicate efforts. The creation of the site inventory portal for the community will be beneficial for viewing the information of what all that is going on and what area it is happening in.
- b. Thomas spoke about the coordination meetings with OC, the consultants, Q Tribe, and USACE to coordinate cleanup in Unalaska. It helps to share information to better use the resources granted. Thomas stated it was an exciting opportunity to work together. He will report an update next meeting. Thomas discussed the city's area of focus on Strawberry Hill and Pyramid Valley. They will be doing a Lidar study of the areas as well as a bathymetry survey for Unalaska Lake and the lake on Standard Oil Hill, which they are working with the Tribe. They will announce a voluntary program for Cabana owners. They have received EPA approval to look for restricted building materials, like asbestos, lead paint and mold in the buildings. It will be more focused on the World War II era housing. This will give more information to get an additional grant to clean it up. Thomas announced that OC will be looking at a cleanup of the asbestos landfills on Strawberry Hill and outside Building 551 cleaning up PCBs.
- c. Natalie shared that OC was one of three recipients of the EPA ANCSA contaminated lands cleanup grant. Building 551 will be the site of that cleanup and will begin this spring. OC is working closely with Jeff Estes of EPA on this grant.
- d. Elise added that the Tribe is working on debris removal in Unalaska Valley and Pyramid Valley this summer.
- e. Cas questioned where the focus on Strawberry Hill will be, as there are tar ponds on the Strawberry Hill site. Thomas outlined the area from Tony's to before the two tanks, and out to the lake and avoid Rocky Point Management Area and tar ponds.

6. 5-minute break 18:55-19:05

7. Chernofski Harbor Supply and Storage Site FUDS Archaeology Update

- a. Kelly Eldridge, senior archaeologist at US Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District provided a report on the Chernofski Harbor Supply and Storage Site.
- b. Wendy Hansen, technical lead and Interim Project Manager for FUDS, USACE did removal actions and investigations. Last action was in 2022, but they were out there in 2017 and 2019. In 2022 USACE removed about 3,000 tons of petroleum contaminated soil.
- c. Kelly spoke about the cultural resources work under an MOA in 2018 with the various



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stakeholders. SHPO, Q Tribe, St. Paul, TDX, the Russian Diocese, OC, and the Aleut Corp. TDX is the largest landowner. Kelly discussed the way that things should be approached due to the historical factors. As cleanup work is underway, they need to treat and approach the very extensive and ancient, culturally dense area for preservation of WWII history and the Unangan history in the Chernofski area. She has really enjoyed working there. She outlined the list of tasks that they own their shareholders. There will be an archaeological monitor on site. Evaluate archaeological sites for NHP. Conduct the excavation in 2022. Also need to conduct an excavation at UNL0034. It is an ancient and historical site right next to the WWII site.

- d. Kelly stated they are required to create a place-based curriculum document. They evaluated three WWII features; the old mess hall, garage, and tank farm. And performed an in-depth historical investigation on the WWII area based on archival records. They just finished this three weeks ago. Kelly dropped off the new Chernofski reports at the library.
- e. Kelly spoke about the significance of the recovery of over 23,000 stone tools and 432 osseo artifacts made of bone or ivory. Many of these artifacts were the first to be excavated from such site in the Aleutians. The Museum of the Aleutians is the repository for these artifacts.
- f. The Chernofski site was an active site until 1920's.
- g. Kelly discussed the CRC conducting an excavation at the Chernofski Village Site (UNL-00034). Within five weeks they excavated ten square meters. Seven fragments of charcoal were collected for C14 analysis in 2019. In 2022 seven additional fragments of charcoal were collected for C14 analysis.
- h. The older dates for UNL-00034 date back 3,000 years. They recovered 23,211 lithic artifacts, 432 osseous artifacts and 560 historical artifacts. And 9,293 animal skeletal elements were analyzed.
- i. In 2022 at UNL-00160, there was one square meter that was excavated at a depth of 1.3 meters where six fragments of charcoal were collected for C14 analysis. 3,658 lithic artifacts, 2 historical artifacts and 11 degraded faunal remains were found. Kelly explained the challenges faced in collecting data from a site disturbed by a military mess hall during World War II.
- j. Kelly also revealed findings from an older site that dated back between 4,000 and 5,000 years ago and a World War II site, primarily an army installation supporting Fort Glen. This village site is behind the slaughterhouse. Some animal bones were still there. Birds, fish, and one seal element.
- k. At the UNL-00235 World War II site, USACE contracted AECOM to conduct archival research at NARA facilities, Kelly said hopefully they will have those reports soon.
- l. Laresa asked about whether walrus items were found and if any other animal bones were found as well. Kelly said there were walrus, polar bear, ring seals and whales there. There were structural whale bones in Chernofski village site.
- m. Rufina asked if they had found anything from another country from 1600's to 1700's. Kelly explained that a Japanese coin was dated from Chernofski, and it looked to predate the arrival of Russians. It was briefly mentioned in his monitoring report that was recently added to the library in Unalaska. In the 1800's there were other countries artifacts found. Rufina also asked about beads. But unfortunately, none have been found as of today.

8. Amaknak FUDS CON/HTRW limited removal action, Summer Bay-Humpy Cove- Little South America.



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- a. Melissa Scully, Environmental Engineer for USACE Alaska District, tech lead for Amaknak project team and interim PM last few months.
 - i. USACE awarded a contract to OCE to complete a removal action in Summer Bay-Humpy Cove and Little South America.
 - ii. A brief overview of the 2024 summer plans. Humpy Cove is the first site to be worked on. Was part of Ft. Brumback and contained tactical artillery, troop housing, mess hall, latrines, power generation and utility systems. 1998 UST and 540 tons of contaminated soil removed. Plan to remove DRO soil contamination. Excavate soil below groundwater. We will perform removal action, install, develop, and sample on temporary well, then install, develop and sample two temporary wells downgradient to see if any contamination migrated. Then decommission the wells then restore the area.
 - iii. The Little South America area includes a latrine site. This summer we are hoping to remove any DRO and determine if any of the contamination has migrated off the site. Removal action, install and develop some wells then restore the area. The second site in LSA was a mess hall, in prior removal action there was no fuel was noted in the tank but there was a fuel odor. This summer we hope to determine whether the residual DRO soil contamination is impacting the groundwater in this area. Plan to drill monitoring wells and decommission if impacting the groundwater.
 - iv. Ellis asked if the residual contamination to bedrock may affect subsistence? Melissa said she could look at the CSM and get back with him on that. Rena also said she would have to get back with him.
 - v. Rena asked specifically what subsistence the community is interested in knowing about. They are worried about the berries and mushrooms. Laresa also said the medicinal plants.

Action Item: Laresa to email list of medicinal plants to Rena for assessment of contaminant pathway risk.

- vi. Melissa gives a brief project schedule. Final Work Plan should be completed in March. A site visit in April, mobilization in June, Humpy Cove power plant, site prep, excavation, well installation in June through July, LSA building 1154 well install in late July, then monitoring well decommission in September. Then Reporting. January 2025 will have a draft report.
- vii. Kelly asked if there would be an archaeological monitor on site.
- viii. Melissa answered that there will be archaeological monitors on site at Little South America sites.

Action Item: Rena/Taylor/Mel to consult risk assessor regarding the potential pathway of contamination to medicinal plants, mushrooms and berries for remaining contamination at LSA site. Rena/Taylor to provide response to Ellis, Laresa, and at next RAB regarding LSA site concentrations, depths, and potential for diesel uptake by berries, mushrooms, or medicinal plants.

9. Fort Learnard FUDS update

- a. Forrest Kranda, Archaeologist for FUDS. Presented about Eider Point which was a coastal artillery defense site. There are residual munitions in two areas on that site.
- b. An archaeological survey was done in 2023 to evaluate Fort Learnard. It was found to be

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eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and contributing to the national landmark of the Naval Operating Base.

- c. Future remediation of munitions field work will include Cultural Resources Monitoring Plan, onsite archaeological monitoring, avoidance of ancestral sites and return the WWII features to their pre-activity conditions to degree possible.
- d. Field work start date is anticipated for April. There is a Systematic Project Planning meeting planned for May 2024, followed by the Public Meeting.
- e. Kelly asked if the meetings. The SPP meeting will be technical including ADEC and SHPO, but there will also be a general public meeting.
- f. Question about CERCLA. Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act authorizes response to releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances into the environment. Forrest explained that most remedial plans and munitions removal must go through the process.
- g. Thomas asked what areas might not be safe to recreate. Forrest showed an Armco hut to where there would be munitions. There is one on the beach as well. Warned to watch where you step as there are things still on the ground. Coastal artillery rounds used were both 6-inch and 20mm ammunition.

10. Review Next Meeting Dates/ Identify Next Steps

- a. Next RAB meeting - May 15, 22 or 29th (Wednesdays)
 - i. Elise stated her preference is the 15 or 29.
 - ii. Ben stated all dates could work for him.
 - iii. Kelly advised that the Tribe has cultural nights on Wednesdays and Taylor is taking classes on Wednesdays. Kelly said Tribe recommended Mondays. Ellis said Mondays are good. Will send May 13, 15, 20 or 29 to RAB members. (May 27th Memorial Day)

Action Item: Taylor to send email request to board members regarding best date for next meeting. Save the date will be distributed once date is selected.

11. Other Announcements/Unplanned Items/Open Discussion

- I. Laresa announced the showing of a movie at the World War II Center. *Twice Colonized* is the name of the movie. There is a \$5 cover charge.
- II. Sarah Bernhardt from ADEC thanked everyone for welcoming her to the meeting and she looks forward to attending all the meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 20:04.

ACTION ITEM SUMMARY		
Action	Owner	Status
Add approval of minutes for November and February meetings to the May 2024 agenda.	Taylor (USACE)	Open
Laresa to email list of medicinal plants to Rena for the	Laresa (OC)	Open



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assessment of contaminants pathway risk.		
Consulting the risk accessors about pathway contaminants to berries, mushrooms, and medicinal plants for remaining contamination at LSA site. Distribute response.	Mel (USACE)	Open
Send email request to board members regarding best date for next meeting.	Taylor (USACE)	Open



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Virtual Chat Record

18:11:38 From Travis Swangel : Apologize...unmuted me somehow

18:40:17 From Sarah Bernhardt, Alaska DEC : Hello everyone! I'm looking forward to working with you all and attending these RAB meetings. We will miss Cas at DEC. We will do our best to fill her shoes. Sarah Bernhardt, you can reach me at sarah.bernhardt@alaska.gov

19:15:43 From Wendy Hansen (USACE) : Thank you Kelly for mentioning the reports!

20:02:54 From Ginny Hatfield : Thanks!! Great meeting!

20:03:14 From Cas Galasso DEC : Thank you everyone! Great meeting.