

# Special Project Adak Update

March  
2000

United States Navy  
United States Environmental Protection Agency  
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation



## An Update on Adak Ordnance Issues

In January 1999, the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation took a step forward in the process of reducing the hazard of unexploded ordnance on Adak.

The federal and state regulatory agencies formally created "Operable Unit B" as part of the process of protecting human health and safety on Adak and assuring compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.

The term "Operable Unit" comes from the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), sometimes called the Superfund law. This law allows for "Operable Units" to be developed to specifically deal with different parts of

cleanup at a site.

There are two "Operable Units" on Adak. Operable Unit A was formed to deal with chemical and petroleum issues, while Operable Unit B deals solely with unexploded ordnance (UXO) and explosive chemical residues.

### **A unique situation leads to the formation of a "Project Team."**

Ordnance presents a unique challenge for federal and state regulatory agencies. Unlike the comprehensive set of laws and guidelines that have regulated chemical and petroleum cleanup standards and actions in the United States since the 1960s, currently little guidance exists for setting cleanup standards for ordnance. Therefore, the agencies responsible for the Adak cleanup and closure –



the Navy, the EPA and the ADEC – assembled an "Adak OU-B Project Team" in July 1999 to address ordnance issues on Adak.

The team includes representatives of the Navy, EPA, ADEC, the Aleutian/Pribilof Island Association (A/PIA), The Aleut Corporation (TAC), and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. The team also includes experts from across the United States in a variety of fields associated with ordnance issues. (Please see the article on Page 2).

"The strength of the OU-B Project Team is that the Navy, EPA and ADEC tapped into a network of experts from around the country," said Tess Carr, ADEC project manager.

"The team doesn't just include one contractor or one group of contractors from

any one agency, but some of the best UXO experts and independent contractors in the industry. This is a fast-moving field and these experts have to stay current on UXO cleanup methods, technological advancements, etc."

According to Carr, the experts don't always agree among themselves on the

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## Upcoming Meetings

### **Restoration Advisory Board**

The next Restoration Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April 15, at 1 p.m. in the Commander's Conference Room, Bob Reeve High School, Adak. Anchorage residents can participate in the meeting via teleconference from the Holiday Inn in Anchorage (2 p.m. Anchorage time). For information please call 1-800-360-1561.

### **Local Boundary Commission**

The Local Boundary Commission will hold a hearing on the petition for Adak to become a Second Class City on April 28 at 6:30 p.m. in the Bob Reeve High School Recreation Room.

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best way to approach Adak ordnance issues, but the OU-B Project Team format provides the opportunity for detailed – and sometimes heated discussions – about the issues. It is from this complex informational exchange that the Adak UXO cleanup approach is being developed, she said.

The Project Team meetings are facilitated by Rick Oglesby, a member of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. Oglesby's job is to make sure that all

considerations are expressed at the table and that everyone has the opportunity for input into the process.

According to Mark Murphy, Adak Project Manager for the Navy, the OU-B Project Team thought it was important to have Aleutian/Pribilof Island Association and The Aleut Corporation representatives at the Project Team meetings.

The goal of including both The Aleut Corporation and A/PIA with the EPA, ADEC and Navy was to involve a broader range of stake-

holders in the Project Team. In addition, US Fish and Wildlife Service representatives also sit on the Project Team to provide information on land-use patterns on Adak, both historically and at present. They also speak on behalf of the agency's interests as managers of the Alaska Maritime Wildlife Refuge, of which Adak is a part.

Laura Calugan, an Adak Community Council member, has agreed to provide information to the community of Adak on the work of the OU-

B Project Team. Calugan will be added to the project team email distribution list and will participate in Project Team teleconference meetings. She has agreed to provide meeting minutes to interested individuals on Adak in order to help keep Adak residents informed of the Project Team's work.

"Input from other interested stakeholders will be folded into team decisions in a variety of ways as the Project Team develops more specific processes, procedures and documents," Murphy said.

## Meet Some of the OU-B Project Team Members

*Here are brief biographies of some of the members of the OU-B Project Team. Members not listed here will be included in the next issue of Adak Update.*

**Scott Arnold, Ph.D.**, brings expertise in risk assessment, mechanistic toxicology, environmental chemistry and bioremediation to the Project Team. He specializes in hazardous substance site investigation risk assessments – which means his expertise includes evaluation of land-use scenarios, determining contamination levels, interactions and limits, and looking at how contamination is released into the environment.



**Tess Carr** serves as the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's Adak Project Manager. She joined ADEC in November 1999

and has expertise in environmental cleanup management with private business, including Jacobs Engineering and BP Exploration. She holds a master's degree in environmental anthropology. Carr brings considerable experience in risk communication and environmental assessment to the Project Team.



**Fran Gomes** serves as the Base Transition Coordinator for Adak and is responsible for facilitating the transition of Adak from a military base to

a civilian community. She has served as the Environmental Program Manager for the Base Closure Cleanup Program at the Naval Facilities Engineering Command for four years. Prior to that she served as the Program Manager for NATO Infrastructure Construction for more than four years.



**Ernesta Ballard** is owner of Ballard and Associates, a private environmental and strategic planning firm. She is the former Regional Administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency and a former CEO of Cape Fox Corporation, the Saxman ANCSA corporation. She holds a master's degree in Business Administration from the Harvard School of Business.



**John Dow** serves as the technical liaison to Chief of Naval Operations for ordnance environmental issues on Adak. He is an environmental

biologist and engineer for the Navy's Ordnance Environmental Support Office, where he specializes in regulatory compliance and research and development regarding munitions and the environment.

**Jim Hersey** is the Head of Acquisition and Technology Division, Research and Development Department, Naval Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technology Division in Indian Head, Md. He has been involved in the UXO detection and clearance arena since the mid-1970s as both a military technology and systems developer and a UXO clearance execution and quality consultant for various agencies. He holds a master's degree in Engineering Administration from George Washington University.

## What is the Project Team's goal?

According to Carr, the goal of the OU-B Project Team is to "create a process of ordnance cleanup that is consistent with CERCLA principles and acceptable to stakeholders."

So far the Project Team has completed four phases of its work including: agreeing on a process for screening ordnance sites; developing an investigation approach for areas requiring further site investigation;

evaluating the technology available for ordnance investigation; and developing a hazard assessment methodology for ordnance-contaminated areas.

## Draft Site Investigation Report: Selected Areas of Potential Concern in Operable Unit B

One of the documents recently completed is the "Draft Site Investigation Report: Selected Areas of Potential Concern in Operable Unit B."

The document is available for review at the Adak and Anchorage information repositories and is posted on the project Web site, [www.adakupdate.com](http://www.adakupdate.com).

Responses to the document should be sent to the Navy by March 31 via e-mail at [murphym@efanw.navy.mil](mailto:murphym@efanw.navy.mil).

Responses received by that date can be included in the upcoming revision to the report. Responses may also be mailed to Mark Murphy at Engineering Field Activity NW, 19917 Seventh Ave., NW,

Poulsbo, WA 98370.

"All responses we receive will be considered by the Project Team," Murphy said.

## What does the Site Investigation Report contain?

One of the Navy's contractors, Foster Wheeler Environmental Corporation, completed a thorough search of the archives and background data relative to WWII activities on Adak. Prior to the Foster Wheeler effort, three other organizations

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**John Martin** is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Refuge Manager Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. He has spent 33 years working for the agency, working from 1976 to 1980 in Adak and from 1980 to the present in Homer. Though Martin plans to retire in June, he has been an active participant in the Project Team and Restoration Advisory Board for many years.

**Tom Murculief** serves as an Environmental Technician and Adak Program Manager for the Aleutian/Pribilof Island Association. Murculief, who was born in St. George and was raised in Nikolski, has a degree in chemistry from Seattle Pacific University. He has worked for 10 years in the environmental field, working for six years on subsistence and oil spill issues for the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Along with serving as the Project Team representative for A/PIA, he also represents the Association on the RAB.

**Mark Murphy** is the Environmental Project Manager for the Navy. He has 10 years of experience in the environmental field having worked in the public and private sector. He holds a degree in Environmental Engineering from the Montana School of Mineral Science and Technology. He is a Registered Professional Engineer. Mark has worked on the Adak project since 1994.

**Doug Murray** is an Ordnance and Explosives Waste Management Specialist with Radian International. He has 16 years of experience in the field, working on ordnance-related projects throughout the world for both the Department of Defense and the private sector.

**Spenser Nelson** serves as a Project Manager for Geophex UXO Ltd. He retired from the Navy in 1997 after serving as a Senior Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician, deep-sea diver and parachutist. He has served as a UXO Team Leader for CMS Environmental, in Fort Ord, Calif., and a UXO Site Supervisor for International Technologies Corporation in Redstone Arsenal, Ala.



**Kevin Oates** serves as the Adak Project Manager for the Environmental Protection Agency. He has 18 years of experience in the environmental field and an academic background in water chemistry and watershed management. Besides having served with the EPA's federal hazardous waste cleanup programs, he has also worked with the USACE and Department of Energy. He also serves with the EPA's Tribal Office.



**Bill Rohrer, Ph.D.**, is a professional geologist and regional planner with more than 25 years of experience in hydrogeology, civil engineering and environmental

planning. He is a Senior Hydrogeologist, Director of Field Services and Director of Technical Animation Services in URS Greiner Woodward Clyde's Seattle office, where he currently serves as Activity Manager for Navy projects in Alaska. Dr. Rohrer has published articles about the policy level and technical issues regarding Adak ordnance in numerous journals and is a presenter at technical symposia throughout the country.

**Jordan Stout** holds a master's degree in environmental toxicology and risk assessment from Duke University. His professional experience includes six years of dredge and fill permitting and enforcement activities in the coastal areas of South Florida and three years on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Environmental Contaminants staff in Anchorage. ■

*Note: The Aleut Corporation recently announced that Vince Tutiakoff will replace Elary Gromoff as TAC's representative on the Project Team.*

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conducted extensive archival research related to ordnance use on Adak.

"Four teams of investigators looked for archival information," said Doug Murray, a UXO expert with Radian International and a Project Team consultant. "In addition to the Foster Wheeler Environmental work, investigations were done by a team from URS Greiner Woodward Clyde, an international engineering and construction firm, by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Navy Environmental Health Command, as well as other Navy consultants.

According to Murray, the team's efforts were complimentary. "One agency confirmed what another agency found, and turned up new information as well. It was an

impressive, in-depth effort," he said.

Based on the archives and the background data, the teams were able to identify areas of potential concern. However, Murray said the archives' search provided the team with the first step in identifying where troops stationed on Adak may have fired weapons. It also provided information on the type of weapons used.

"The next step was to validate or invalidate archival data by investigating the identified sites for geophysical evidence of UXO," Murray added.

The teams used instruments that include state-of-the-art technology to look for magnetic objects under the ground.

"The technology finds ord-

nance items by sensing the electromagnetic signatures of the item," Murray said. "This allows geophysicists – with the help of software – to identify areas where further investigation may be needed."

Both the EPA and ADEC experts reviewed the data. The Project Team then developed criteria for deciding which specific sites on Adak were most likely to have ordnance.

"The Level One screening is a tool to categorize the status of sites," said ADEC Project Manager Tess Carr. "Approximately 175 Areas of Potential Concern (APOCs) were identified and catego-

rized according to what we think happened there and what kind of contamination resulted."



## How are Areas of Potential Concern evaluated?

The Project Team evaluated Areas of Potential Concern on four criteria:

- **Likelihood of contamination** – based on the original activity and intent of ordnance use at the site;
- **Assumed density of contamination** – related to the type of ordnance use, the amount of time it was used and the intensity of ordnance activity either assumed or documented at a site;
- **Hazard severity** – the severity of the hazard is related to the type of ordnance known or suspected to be present along with the accessibility of the site; and
- **Strength of evidence** – the amount and the consistency of archival and field evidence.

## How are ordnance sites classified?

According to Carr, the Level One screening process resulted in screened sites being classified according to three possible outcomes.

- Sites could be listed as:
- **No Further Action sites** –

## Boundary Commission to Meet on Adak

The Alaska Department of Community and Economic Development released a preliminary report regarding the petition to incorporate Adak as a Second Class City.

The preliminary report concluded that the standards for incorporation as outlined in State law have not been met and recommended that the Local Boundary Commission deny the incorporation petition.

Comments on the preliminary report were filed and will be considered when the Local Boundary Commission holds a hearing on the petition April 28 at 6:30 p.m. in the Bob Reeve High School Recreation Room, on Adak.

According to the preliminary report, the boundaries of the proposed City of Adak as outlined in the petition "do not include all the land and water necessary to provide

full development of essential city services on an efficient, cost-effective level" as required by Alaska law. The report stated that "the proposed city boundaries include extensive territory that will not be subject to growth and development during the next decade."

In addition to the proposed boundaries, the report concluded that the population and economic base that presently exists on Adak are not large enough to support city government and city services.

The Commission will hear testimony when it meets on Adak in April. The Local Boundary Commission will make the final decision on the petition after members hear testimony and consider the written comments regarding the report's findings.



to be documented and left alone;

■ Sites that require immediate removal action of an imminent hazard; or

■ Sites that require further characterization and investigation.

At present, there are a number of sites identified for no further action and a number of sites requiring further characterization during the 2000 summer field season.

### **Draft Preliminary Assessment Report: Selected Areas of Potential Concern in Operable Unit B**

The Level One screening process resulted in the preparation of the "Draft Preliminary Assessment Report: Selected Areas of Potential Concern in Operable Unit B."

This report, prepared by Foster Wheeler, is also currently available in the information repositories in Adak and Anchorage. This report provides maps, drawings and other information collected as part of the ordnance investigation to date, and identifies areas of potential concern.

"The goal of the project screening is safety," Murphy said. "Although with the existing technology, we can't guarantee that there is absolutely no ordnance in any area, we can come to a high degree of certainty that the ordnance hazard in an area is very low."

"The ADEC role on the Project Team is similar to the role played by the EPA," said

ADEC Project Manager Carr. "It is to ensure that human health and safety are protected in a way that is satisfactory to the OU-B stakeholders."

"This is a qualitative assessment," said Doug Murray. "If there is a reasonable certainty that ordnance could or would have been found in a site, then that site is sent on for further sampling and study – a process called remedial investigation."

### **What is "Remedial Investigation?"**

The goal of a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study under the CERCLA process is to characterize sites in order to provide enough additional data to support decision making.

For Operable Unit B on Adak, the goal of the remedial investigation process being developed is to narrow down and intensify the search for ordnance in the areas that pose the greatest potential hazard.

"We will work to define the boundaries of possible ordnance areas so that better decisions on how to remediate sites can be made," Murphy said.

He said the Remedial Investigation Work Plan is scheduled to be available for review and public comment on March 31.

The document will be available in the Adak and Anchorage information repositories and will be

## **Documents Available for Public Review**

To follow is a schedule for public review of documents currently available or soon to be released. Documents are in the Anchorage and Adak Information Repositories and are either currently on the Adak Web site, [www.adakupdate.com](http://www.adakupdate.com), or will be added to the site by March 31.

**Draft Site Investigation Report:** Public comments should be sent to Mark Murphy by March 31, 2000, at EFA NW 19917 Seventh Ave., NW, Poulsbo, WA 98370.

**Draft Preliminary Assessment Report:** Public comments should be sent to Mark Murphy by April 7, 2000, at EFA NW 19917 Seventh Ave., NW, Poulsbo, WA 98370.

**Institutional Controls Management Plan:** Public Comments should be sent to Patty Kelly by May 9, 2000, at EFA NW 19917 Seventh Ave., NW, Poulsbo, WA 98370.

**Remedial Investigation Work Plan:** The Remedial Investigation Work Plan is scheduled to be available for review and public comment on March 31, 2000. Comments should be sent to Mark Murphy by April 30, 2000, at EFA NW 19917 Seventh Ave., NW, Poulsbo, WA 98370.

posted on the project Web site, he said.

"This plan will determine where the efforts will be focused during the 2000 field season on Adak," Murphy said.

There will be a 30-day public comment period on

the plan.

"When the Remedial Investigation Work Plan comes out, we want the public, and especially the community on Adak, to review the plan and involve themselves in the process," Murphy said. ■

## **Restoration Advisory Board Adds New Members and Elects Co-Chair**

At the March 8 Restoration Advisory Board meeting in Anchorage, Cathy Villa, a member of the Adak Community Council, was unanimously elected the new community co-chair of the Adak RAB. Villa replaces Elary Gromoff, who resigned as RAB co-chair in January.

Villa will assume co-chair duties at the April 15 RAB meeting to be held on Adak. Her duties include working with Navy co-chair Richard Stoll to prepare meeting agendas and run RAB meetings.

Chris Gates was elected to represent The Aleut Corporation on the RAB. A number of Adak community residents were also elected to serve as RAB members: Patty Vessel, Keith Martin, Charlotte Griswald, Carl Calugan and Laura Calugan.

### **Where to Get Information • INFOLINE: 1-800-360-1561 • [www.adakupdate.com](http://www.adakupdate.com)**

University of Alaska Anchorage  
Library Reserve Room  
3211 Providence Dr.  
907-786-1871 - M-F, 8 am to 5 pm,  
Contact: Librarian

NAF Adak, Adak Island, Alaska,  
Bob Reeve High School Library  
M-F, 8 am to 5 pm,  
Contact: Lt. Commander Ted Posuniak  
907-592-8170

Administrative Record  
Engineering Field Activity NW  
19917 Seventh Ave., NW  
Poulsbo, WA 98370  
Contact: Richard Stoll

# Adak Web Site Provides Public Information



In an effort to provide another forum for the public to receive information on the Naval Air Facility Adak base closure, the Navy has brought a new Web site online.

The site, [www.adakupdate.com](http://www.adakupdate.com), provides an overview of the processes leading to the closure and reuse of Naval Air Facility Adak.

Information currently available includes:

## Background Information on Naval Air Facility Adak Closure

This section provides an overview of the laws and regulations governing defense base closures. A brief history of Adak and the environmental and regulatory cleanup objectives for the closure of Naval Air Facility Adak are reviewed. Links are provided to related information.

## Newsletters and Fact Sheets

Public information newsletters published by the Navy, the US Environmental Protection Agency and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation are presented, as well as Fact Sheets on various issues prepared by the U.S. Navy relative to the closure of Naval Air Facility Adak.

## Technical Documents and Reports

Technical documents and reports related to the Record of Decision for chemical and petroleum cleanup of Adak are posted. This section focuses on current reports related to unexploded ordnance (UXO) cleanup efforts on Adak.

## Chemical and Petroleum Cleanup

An overview of chemical and petroleum cleanup issues on Adak is provided, as well as a link to the Record of Decision containing all chemical, petroleum and landfill closure decisions.

## Unexploded Ordnance Issues

Important information related to unexploded ordnance issues on Adak is posted. A link is provided to technical documents related to UXO cleanup and regulatory decisions for Adak.

## Restoration Advisory Board Minutes

Minutes of the monthly community Restoration Advisory Board meetings held in Anchorage and Adak are posted, as well as contact information.

Also included are links to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of Defense Web sites.

## Adak Update

Engineering Field Activity, Northwest  
19917 Seventh Ave., NW  
Poulsbo, WA 98370