How to Plan Projects Using the Uniform Federal Policy for Quality Assurance Project Plans (UFP QAPP) – Transcript

Scene 2: Scoping Meeting – Problem Definition

Speakers: Don Fry, Holly Swanson, Karen Runyon, and Michael Regala

Holly Swanson: Okay, thank you, everybody, for making it here to our scoping session. Don, I thought it might make the most sense since we have a new project team member, and if we just go around the room and introduce ourselves.

Don Fry: Yes, yes, I think that'd be great. Michael, good to finally meet you face to face. Welcome aboard. I'm Don Fry, the lead Agency RPM for the project.

Karen Runyon: I'm Karen Runyon, the EPA lead for the project.

Michael Regala: Hi, I'm Michael Regala, the new guy from the State Department of Environmental Quality. Here's my card.

Don Fry: Thank you, Michael.

Michael Regala: I really appreciate the read-ahead material. It's given me a chance to get a little more familiar with the project. Obviously, I'll have some questions today.

Holly Swanson: I'm Holly Swanson, the Support Contractor for Don. I'll be taking minutes as we go forward.

Don Fry: To make this meeting as efficient as possible, Holly and I have had a series of pre-meetings. We put together a package that we sent to all of you. We want to make sure we maximize everyone's time and make sure that we're able to review the material and come as prepared as possible.

I thought we would start today's meeting by having Holly give us a brief overview of the site and review the items that we think we already have consensus on. Holly?

Holly Swanson: Okay, so to refresh our memories and to help Michael out, Site 10, [joint based Shangri-La], West Dakota is about a 2.7 acre area located approximately 250 feet south of perimeter road in publics work compound. It currently consists of an open overgrown grassy field surrounded by mixed hardwood woodland. Old building foundations, concrete pads, and low retaining walls litter the site. As you know, this is a removal action for us, so this issue of old foundations poses some concerns for us when we're digging some stuff out.

Site 10 was reportedly used from 1940 to 1978 to store containers of industrial waste and debris on the ground. We got that information from some old-timer interviews that actually we confirmed with some sampling. The samples also showed the presence of pesticides.

So this gives a pictorial overview of the base, here, Site 10. It's pretty accessible by these roads, so we shouldn't have any problem getting to the site.

Michael Regala: Are you worried, at all, about contamination affecting the groundwater?

Holly Swanson: No, from our earlier studies we've ruled out groundwater contamination as a concern, and the project team agreed. The RI report, including the baseline human health risk assessment and screening level, ecological risk assessment was completed last spring, just prior to you coming on board, Michael. Prior to finalizing the RI reports the results were presented to the partner and team. The screening level ERA indicated that pesticides and inorganics contributed to potential unacceptable ecological risks in the four areas, and that is what we're here to discuss.

The confirmation that the removal action will sufficiently reduce the ecological risk at the site by removing contaminated soil in those four areas. The project team recommended removing the contaminated soil prior to reevaluating the ecological risk. We figure that removing these four hot spots made the most sense.

The team proposed not including areas five and six in this particular action. Area five was initially included because of elevated mercury, but this concentration was below background so we're not planning on including it in this action. Area six was initially included because of elevated lead, but due to site specific background concentrations documented in the RI we've removed it from consideration here, as well. Okay?

Michael Regala: Before we go on, I'm still concerned about areas five and six, so I want to make sure that we don't lose track of them.

Don Fry: No, we're not forgetting about those two areas, Michael. We will be looking at them after completion of the removal action, and we'll be evaluating them as part of the whole site.

Holly Swanson: This gives a blowup of the site, itself. You can see where we'll be removing soil from areas one, two, three, and four. We'll be excavating soil from each one of those areas for the removal process.

We evaluated the human health risk assessment at the site in earlier investigation work. We concluded there was no unacceptable risk to current onsite workers, trespassers, future construction workers, or adult residents from exposure to the soils. Therefore, as far as this removal action is concerned, the workers, themselves, should be safe.

Don Fry: Thanks, Holly. I think that was a really good review. Holly, can I ask you to step up to the whiteboard? I think what we need to do is we need to write the question that we're all trying to answer here today. If you would?

Will the proposed excavation areas and depths -- will the proposed excavation areas and depths be sufficient to mitigate the risk? How does that look to everyone?

Karen Runyon: That's a great start. How about we change it to will the proposed excavation areas and depths be sufficient to mitigate the risk to ecological receptors?

Don Fry: So will the proposed excavation areas and depths be sufficient to mitigate the risk to the ecological receptors? Everyone in agreement there?

Holly Swanson: All right, so I want to make sure that I note in the minutes that we have consensus on the problem definition.

Karen Runyon: Yes.

Don Fry: Yes, I think so.

Michael Regala: Yes, but I do have one other question. When you finish the excavation what sampling design do you plan on using to confirm that you've removed the contamination?

Don Fry: Well, that is one of the things that we're here to talk about today, Michael, but that will probably be a lengthy discussion. So before we go any further I propose we take our first break, say, 15 minutes?