

*Responses to Comments,
Suggestions, and Questions*

24 February 2004 Public Meeting
Picher, Oklahoma

Response to Suggestions

➤ Interview past miners

- The Corps of Engineers has been in contact with several persons with mining experience. Please, feel free to bring to our attention the names of persons that the Corps should contact.

➤ Obtain update to Ken Luza's study (done by James Graves— Grand Gateway)

- The Corps is coordinating with Ken Luza as he works on continuing to update his maps and research.

Response to Suggestions

- Publish a quarterly newsletter
 - A newsletter is being produced jointly by the Corps, EPA and Department of Interior. Other agencies involved also have an opportunity to contribute to the newsletter.
 - The newsletter will be published every two to three months. Copies of the newsletter are mailed to each person on the mailing list and are also available on the Corps of Engineers website– www.swt.usace.army.mil
 - The mailing lists from the EPA and Corps have been combined to ensure the widest possible distribution of the newsletter.

Response to Suggestions

- Post a quarterly update on the web site
 - Documents are posted to the website as they become available.
 - The newsletter is also available online, and it contains updates.
- Make timely announcements of meetings and developments via e-mail and/or letter
 - Meetings are announced two weeks prior to the meeting date in the local paper, as well as by letter to persons on the mailing list. The newsletter also contains approximate dates for upcoming meetings.

Response to Suggestions

- Hold small group and public meetings
 - Public meetings are held every two to three months.
 - Small group meetings are held as requested.
 - Individual meetings are also held at the individual's request.
 - Please let us know if additional small group meetings are desired.

Response to Comment

- The first question that must be answered is if the towns of Picher and Cardin are safe for human habitation.
 - ATSDR and the EPA are addressing the safety of living in Picher and Cardin in their public health and risk assessments.
- (ATSDR = Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry)
- The Corps of Engineers is looking at the risk of subsidence as a part of the Watershed Management Plan.

Response to Comment

- Somebody has to be in charge so that the projects proceed in a logical fashion to an agreed upon desired final result.
 - The May 2003 Tar Creek Memorandum of Understanding has provided a framework enabling the EPA, DoI (Department of Interior), and USACE (Corps), in coordination with the States of Oklahoma, Kansas and Missouri, to work closely so that projects are coordinated to achieve the goals identified.

Response to Comment

- No further work should be done until we can be certain it fits into the final framework and can be safely done. In particular, no chat should be moved until the issue of the consequences to the residents can be fully resolved.
 - If the Corps moves any chat, the surrounding area will be monitored very closely.

Response to Questions

- How many people will work on the Recon full time? Part time? What are their disciplines?
 - There are many technical experts from various agencies, governments, and local communities involved in the development of the watershed management plan.
 - A list of technical team members will be posted on the Corps website. www.swt.usace.army.mil

Response to Questions

- When will the first rough draft of the recon report be completed?
 - The first full draft of the report will be completed in August 2004.
- Will it be presented to stakeholders for comment?
 - Yes. The information will be presented and the draft report will be available for comment.
 - To the extent possible, pertinent information for various components of the draft report will be coordinated with the public beginning in February 2004.

Response to Comment

- It will take some “strong arm” tactics at high places to get good cooperation with state agencies and other federal agencies to be able to complete the recon in the proposed time frame.
 - The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Interior, and The Corps of Engineers signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining tasks and focus areas for each agency.
 - Federal and State agencies have also been meeting regularly to exchange and gather information.

Response to Comment

- The Corps needs to focus on the health issues of children, giving this issue the highest priority for investigation during the recon; both short term and long term. All other issues are of less priority in my opinion.
 - Health and safety problems have been identified as the community's greatest concerns and are the priorities of the watershed management plan evaluation process.
 - ATSDR and the EPA are addressing the safety of living in Picher and Cardin in their public health and risk assessments.

(ATSDR = Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry)

Response to Comment/Suggestion

- I'm a concerned citizen and have lived here all my life. I think you should get us out of here and turn this in to a wetland.
 - At this point, all options are being considered in order to identify a comprehensive plan that ensures the safety of the residents and restoration of the ecosystem to an acceptable condition.

Response to Comment

- Doctors are saying how the environment is affecting our children. We need to get our children out of here. Please do not let anyone move the chat when we are here. Everyone knows the danger. I can't believe that is even considered.
 - The Governor's initiative has taken the first steps toward protecting the health of children in the area.
 - In the event that any chat is moved, a proactive plan will be used to ensure the protection of human health.
 - The air quality would be monitored very closely in order to ensure that the plan is effective and activities do not increase the risk of exposure to the residents.
 - Many alternatives are being developed for consideration.