

## CHAPTER 4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### 4-1. Introduction.

a. This chapter outlines key features of the public participation process for OE response actions at FUDS. Public participation is an integral component of the OE response process. The USACE is committed to providing public participation activities during OE response projects.

b. Public participation activities serve many purposes during OE response actions, including the following:

(1) Serve the community's information needs by keeping local residents, officials, and other stakeholders informed in a timely manner of major OE actions or phases of operation being conducted at the site.

(2) Provide local residents, officials and other stakeholders an opportunity to review and comment on studies being conducted and on suggested response alternatives and decisions.

(3) Foster and maintain a climate of understanding and trust between stakeholders and USACE.

c. For FUDS, the district, with support from the OE Design Center and the OE MCX as needed, will be responsible for public participation activities. Under the BRAC and IR programs, public participation activities at OE contaminated sites are the responsibility of the installation.

d. Detailed information on public participation activities is published in Engineer Pamphlet (EP) 1110-3-8, Public Participation in the Defense Environmental Restoration Program.

4-2. Public Participation Requirements. The major public participation and community involvement activities associated with OE response projects include: the Community Relations Program, the Restoration Advisory Board, and the Administrative Record.

a. Community Relations Program.

(1) USACE establishes and maintains community relations programs at FUDS for OE response projects. A central component of the community relations program is the Community Relations Plan (CRP).

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(2) The PM is responsible for the preparation and approval of a CRP. The CRP will serve as the framework to establish a successful information exchange with the public for OE response actions. The CRP applies to all USACE elements responsible for managing OE sites.

(3) Additional guidance on the community relations program and the CRP is published in EP 1110-3-8.

b. Restoration Advisory Board (RAB).

(1) The PM must determine if there is sufficient, sustained community interest to establish a RAB. The purpose of a RAB is to serve as a forum for discussion and exchange of information between agencies and affected communities. The RAB provides an opportunity for stakeholders to have a voice and actively participate in the review of technical documents, review restoration progress, and provide individual advice to decision makers regarding restoration activities. Procedures for establishing and maintaining a RAB are published in EP 1110-3-8.

(2) RABs can receive technical assistance from independent sources to interpret scientific information and engineering issues through the Technical Assistance for Public Participation program (TAPP). Detailed information on the TAPP process is published in EP 1110-3-8.

c. Administrative Record.

(1) The PM is responsible for establishing and maintaining the Administrative Record for every OE response project. The Administrative Record contains documents generated during the OE response process and presents the rationale for the selection of a response action. Additionally, comments that reflect the USACE's consideration of all public comments are included in this record.

(2) The Administrative Record serves as the basis for judicial review of the response action selection process. Failure to implement the required steps and to document these activities may result in the government being unable to support and defend its decision and increase the government's liability in OE response actions.

(3) Procedures for establishing and maintaining the Administrative Record are published in EP 1110-3-8.