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Spring Valley
Formerly Used Defense Site
Washington D.C.

A Systematic Approach to Addressing Risk Communication

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Spring Valley Program Manager

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Presentation Outline

- Project history and current investigation
- Investigations
  - *Hazardous & Toxic wastes*
  - *Military Munitions Response Program*
- Non-Technical Risks
- Strategy for addressing Non-Technical Risks
- Integrating participating agencies at public affairs level
- Communications tools used to keep stakeholders informed

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Spring Valley Then & Now

- American University Experiment Station (1917-1920)
  - U.S. government facility
  - Used for research and testing of chemical agents, equipment and munitions.
- Today, the Spring Valley neighborhood encompasses:
  - About 660 acres
  - 1,200 private homes
  - Several embassies and foreign properties
  - American University and Wesley Seminary

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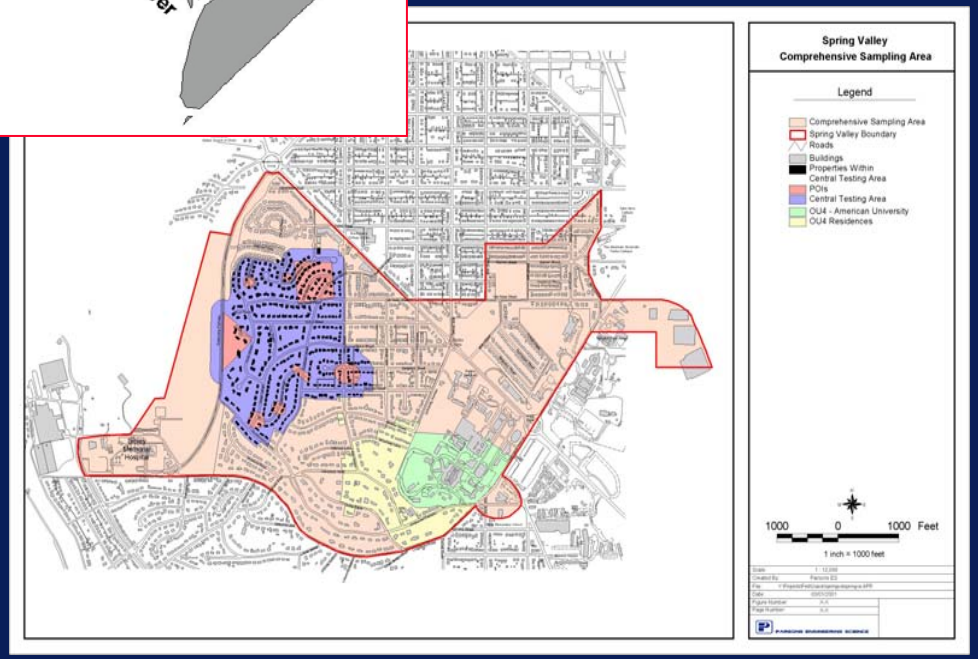
Spring Valley
Then & Now



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History that Eroded Trust

- 1986 American University request to Army
- January 1993 Contractor unearths WWI munitions
- 1993-95 investigation focuses on over 50 Points of Interest
- 1995 Record of Decision recommends No Further Action
- 1999 Corps returns at urging of regulatory community
- 2003 analysis of glass vial containing Lewisite several months after recovery

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Current Investigation Efforts

Hazardous & Toxic Wastes projects:

- Soil sampling of properties for arsenic contamination
  - Sampled 92%
- Arsenic contaminated soil removals
  - 140 properties require remediation
  - Over 29,000 tons of contaminated soil removed and disposed
  - Phytoremediation study

- Groundwater study
  - Looking for contamination and potential interaction with reservoir

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Current Investigation Efforts (Cont.)

Military Munitions Response Program projects:

- Geophysical surveys
- Intrusive investigations
  - Lot 18
  - Glenbrook Road disposal pits
  - 150 residential properties
  - Potential disposal at Dalecarlia Woods

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Investigation Results

- 140 residential properties require remediation for Arsenic contaminated soils
- At least 50 residential properties require ordnance investigations
- Perchlorate discovered in groundwater
- High anxiety among residential stakeholders
- Common desire to be remediated quickly
- Project Schedule for known work extends through FY 2010

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Impacts to Residents

Before

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Impacts to Residents

Excavation

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Impacts to Residents

Restoration

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Impacts to Residents

After

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Project Challenges

Technical

- Incomplete historical records
- Redistribution of landscape
- Limits of geophysical tools
- Concurrent ordnance/CWM and HTW investigations
- Ongoing discoveries
- Needs to be addressed still growing

Non-technical

- Credibility
- Location
- Visibility

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Unique Spring Valley Factors Drive Significant Non-Technical Demands

- Credibility
  - Initial site evaluation in 1986 resulting in no action needed
  - Work conducted in 1993 to 1995, left but then returned
- Location
  - Properties owned by Appointees, Senators, Ambassadors, American University and other VIPs
    - These are the people asking questions, watching our process and signing rights-of-entry
  - Minutes from Capitol Hill and Pentagon
- Visibility
  - One of the most significant FUDS projects in country
  - Weekly press coverage, year in, year out

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Diverse Non-Technical Demands

- **Political Interests**
  - Congressman Dingell request for detailed info
  - Congressional hearings, 2001, 2002
  - Congressional briefings 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004
  - Washington D C City Council hearings 2003, 2004
  - Advisory Neighborhood Committee (ANC) briefing 2004
- **Media Interests**
  - Television
  - Printed media, local and national
- **Lobbying Entities**
  - National Wilderness Institute
  - Natural Resources Defense Council
- **EPA CID Investigation**
  - Investigation complete - no evidence of criminal acts
- **GAO investigation**
  - Report issued Jun 02 - no negative findings

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Systematic Approach to Address Non-Technical Risks

- **Establishment of Formal Partnering Group**
  - Multi-tiered management and oversight (USACE, EPA and DC Health)
  - Identified consensus voting members and decision-making process
  - Development of a Master Partnering Communication Plan
  - Tier 1 (monthly) and Tier 2/3 (tri-annually) Partnering meetings
  - Development of process documents (e.g., data sharing policy) to guide Partnership and give transparency (trust) to stakeholders tracking project
- **Pro-active Communication and Stakeholder Outreach**
  - Include ANC chairperson and RAB's TAPP consultant in monthly Partnership meetings (RAB members invited, but choose not to attend)
  - Periodic meetings with political interests
  - Monthly 1-page updates for stakeholders and elected officials via e-mail
  - E-mail distribution lists for meeting needs of specific stakeholder groups
  - Media Day Events

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Partnership and Stakeholder Outreach Components Allow USACE to Operate Successfully in Influential Neighborhood

Benefits of Partnership

- **Tiered partnering system**
  - Keeps leadership informed
  - Provides avenue for elevating disagreements
- **Joint ownership of priorities and decisions by**
  - Keeping Partners informed of field progress (e.g., Daily report on field work)
  - Sharing meeting responsibilities (e.g., Meeting agendas developed together)
  - Documenting agreements and next steps (e.g., Minutes; action items)
  - Maintaining transparency of progress (e.g. meeting minutes reviewed by partners and posted on project's web site)
- **Allows public stakeholders to**
  - See actions of partnership
  - Know that leadership is aware of and/or involved in key decisions

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Benefits of Partnership and Stakeholder Outreach (Cont.)

- **Benefits of Stakeholder Outreach**
- Keeps Partnership's finger on public pulse
  - Allows Partnership to address issues before they become costly fires
- Makes Project Accessible to affected property owners
  - Allows USACE to get rights-of-entry to complete projects
- Gives USACE, EPA and DC Health more protection from public scrutiny
  - Increases ability to produce joint news releases
  - Increases willingness of regulators to defend difficult project decisions (e.g., delay of remediating 3rd pit)

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Constant Goals of Systematic Approach

- Demonstrate Partnership in word and action
- Share ownership in setting priorities and making major decisions
- Use outreach (strengthened relationships) with elected officials, property owners and broader public to provide time necessary to get the technical answers
- Keep technical side of project moving forward and within annual budget through a proactive and fluid communications/outreach program

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Spring Valley Lessons

- Public support is essential for success
- USACE, EPA or DC Health acting independently will find very limited success within the community
- The Partnership succeeds when public stakeholders are well informed and well integrated
- - Requires investment, commitment and transparency
- - Hurdles (e.g., new discoveries) are met and overcome as a group
- Public support for ordnance/CWM cleanup in affluent neighborhood is only possible with functional Partnership

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Communication Tools
Focus on the audience

- **General public**
  - Current and useful website
  - News media
- **Spring Valley community**
  - Community-wide meetings
  - Restoration Advisory Board
  - Newsletter
  - Toll-free information line
  - Fact sheets
- **Directly affected residents**
  - Letters, postcards, flyers, door hangers
  - Meetings with individuals, small groups
- **Elected officials**
  - Briefings, monthly update
- **Partnering agencies**
  - Meetings, email, reports

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Web site

- **Baltimore District Hot Topic**
  - Macro schedule
  - RAB minutes, info
  - Overview
  - Update
  - Lot 18 daily reports
  - Newsletters
  - Maps
  - Reports
  - News releases
  - Testimonies
  - Links

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Project Newsletter

- **The *Corps'pondent* issued every 4 - 8 weeks**
  - Major project progress
  - RAB meeting summaries
  - Key announcements
  - Key Partnering information
  - Media coverage corrections

The Corps' mission in Spring Valley is to identify, investigate and remove or remediate threats to human health, safety or the environment from past Department of Defense activities in the neighborhood.

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The Corps'pondent

a newsletter by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for Spring Valley residents

May 2005

Project update: ferns planted, Lot 18 to resume

by Gary Schilling
Program Manager

Phytoremediation

About 10,000 ferns are being planted this month on 11 properties for the 2005 phytoremediation study. This year's work is an expansion of the initial study done in 2004.

The team modified the study approach to address concerns specific to Spring Valley. Soil sampling was done before the planting to help ensure the grid is adequately delineated. At Lot 15, along the fence at the Van Ness Reservoir, the plot has been reconfigured to focus the ferns along the fence where the highest levels of arsenic contamination are concentrated.

The results will allow the partners to better evaluate the potential for phytoremediation in Spring Valley.

Lot 18

$5 million and $4.6 million were committed for the completion of Lot 18 and the surrounding anomalies by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters respectively.

Plans to re-start digging in June remain on target. Work to accommodate improvements that will increase productivity is ongoing. Construction of a new, larger engineering control structure is in progress at the site, along with preparations of the chemical agent filtration systems and staff training.

The on-site emergency siren and the emergency ring-down system will be tested May 31 at noon. When digging

Update continued on p. 3

Replacement trees go in on city-owned property

by Mary Beth Thompson
Public Affairs Specialist

The Corps of Engineers coordinated with the Friends of Friendship Park to plant 22 trees of varied species in Friendship Park, a children's playground sometimes called Turtle Park, in April. Eleven trees were planted on 44th Street between Van Ness and Warren Streets in May.

"By planting trees on city-owned property, we are repaying the city for trees we had to take out for our arsenic-affected soil removal project," said Ed Hughes, project manager.

Hughes manages the Corps' hazardous and toxic waste projects in Spring Valley. One of those projects is the removal of arsenic-affected soil from about 140 properties, including some city-owned land.

"When a tree has to be removed due to elevated arsenic levels, we owe the property owner — in this case, the city — for that tree," Hughes said.

Trees continued on p. 4

Workers plant trees in Friendship Park.

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Media and VIP Days

- **Tours offered for major field activities**
  - Use of the Explosive Destruction System
  - Use of the T-10 chamber on-site
  - Prior to digging at sites considered ‘high-probability’ for encountering chemical agent

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Fact Sheets and Brochures

- **Site-wide**
  - Safety fact sheet for identifying and responding to potential ordnance or CWM containers
- **Project-specific**
  - Resident's Guide for Spring Valley Soil Removal
  - Shelter-in-Place brochure and quick reference card for emergency during 'high-probability' dig
  - Phytoremediation, Lot 18, etc. fact sheets

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Restoration Advisory Board

- Established May 2001
- Meets 10 - 12 times a year
- Diverse cross-section of community stakeholders
- Meetings open to the public
- Forum for discussion and exchange of information
- Forum for education about complex, technical processes