



Department of Toxic Substances Control



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Sacramento, California 95826-3200



Linda S. Adams
Secretary for
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September 6, 2007

Mr. Damon Golubics
Senior Planner
City of Benicia
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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL'S COMMENTS ON LOWER ARSENAL MIXED USE SPECIFIC PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT JULY 2007, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE # 2007062021

Dear Mr. Golubics:

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has reviewed and has the following comments on the document, *Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report, July 2007* (EIR). DTSC is the lead state regulatory agency overseeing the hazardous substances/wastes investigations in what encompassed the former Benicia Arsenal. The United States Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento Office (USACE) is the federal Department of Defense authority/entity that has been conducting various investigations in areas of the former arsenal over the past few years.

Attached is a letter DTSC sent to Ms. Heather Chin-Chu McLaughlin, attorney for the City of Benicia, dated March 27, 2007, regarding the initial notification of the proposal to develop the lower arsenal. The March letter identifies issues associated with developing areas of the historic arsenal that are potentially contaminated by chemical or explosives wastes left over from former Army activities. Based on our review of the EIR, we reiterate the concerns stated in the March letter. DTSC's review of the EIR focuses on identifying areas where potential health and environmental impacts are probable as a result of former Arsenal activities.

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The lower arsenal contains known and likely unknown areas of contaminated soil, groundwater and air. Some areas of previous investigations are not complete. Numerous property parcels in the proposed development area have potentially uncharacterized hazardous waste contamination. There are also areas that have known or suspected ordnance contamination from former Arsenal activities. As with areas of chemical contamination the investigations of ordnance waste to date are not complete in all areas. As stated in the March letter, this results in a degree of uncertainty which will require Preliminary Endangerment Assessments to be completed prior to reuse.

The EIR contains a Section titled; "IV. Setting, Impacts and Mitigation Measures: E. Hazards and Hazardous Materials." The section identifies a variety of contaminants of concern. These contaminants include lead and asbestos in historical buildings. Also discussed is the use of hazardous materials during former Arsenal activities and documented releases gleaned from several regulatory databases. The discussion and identification of contaminants and areas of potential releases is incomplete. The Table IV.E-1: Documented Environmental Releases, Hazardous Materials Usage or Hazardous Waste Generation in the Plan Area is also incomplete. As stated previously, DTSC does not consider any area of the former Arsenal as fully characterized. Some areas have been investigated and there are data that verify known contamination. What is referred to as Area I 50 Series Complex in Benicia Arsenal Investigative documents verifies contamination in soil, soil gas and groundwater by chlorinated solvents, specifically trichloroethene; metals; polyaromatic hydrocarbons; and fuel related compounds, particularly diesel and motor oil. To date, the 50 Series Complex is the most contaminated part of the former Arsenal. The groundwater contamination, although investigated, is not remediated. The storm drain system is an area of concern. Contamination in and around the storm drain system has not been characterized for potential indoor air risks. There has been inadequate air sampling for indoor vapor intrusion of contaminants from soil/subsurface hazardous waste contamination that may volatilize in the work/live areas along Jackson and Tyler Streets. There are unresolved ordnance issues in the proposed development area and in the bay. These areas have not been screened or remediated to an acceptable level. Finally, there are no approved DTSC ecological or human health risk assessments for any areas within the former Arsenal.

Mr. Damon Golubics
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Please contact me with any questions you may have at (916) 255-3707 or
cparent@dtsc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Christine Parent
Project Manager
Office of Military Facilities

Attachment

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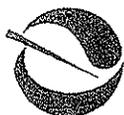
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Arnold Schwarzenegger
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March 27, 2007

Ms. Heather Chin-Chu McLaughlin
City of Benicia
250 East L Street
Benicia, California 94510

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IN THE FORMER LOWER BENICIA ARSENAL, BENICIA, CALIFORNIA

Dear Ms. McLaughlin:

This letter is in regards to the proposed development for the lower arsenal for what was part of the former Benicia Arsenal, Benicia, California. Areas under consideration are in a document titled, "Lower Arsenal Mixed Use Specific Plan." The areas include property parcels on Grant Street and what is referred to as Commission Row; both areas were part of the former Benicia Arsenal. The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is the lead regulatory agency overseeing the investigation into the former Arsenal and in that capacity there are a number of issues that DTSC wants to ensure the City of Benicia acknowledges before developing these areas specifically and generally any of the properties that incorporated the former Arsenal.

Although, the United States Army Corps of Engineers has conducted a number of investigations throughout areas that were part of the former Arsenal, none of these investigations have resulted in completed characterizations. Lack of complete characterizations could mean residual contamination from activities conducted during tenure of the Arsenal. Of concern are hazardous chemical contamination from industrial operations and areas where munitions and explosives of concern were stored/disposed /dumped. In addition, the potential adverse public health and ecological risk impacts have not been evaluated. Because of the uncertainty, development without adequate assessment is a potential public health concern and increased liability for the City of Benicia.

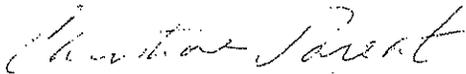
To address the uncertainty caused by incomplete site characterizations, Preliminary Endangerment Assessments (PEA) will need to be conducted for each property parcel. The PEAs will focus on the probable contaminant(s) of concern and the potential health and ecological risk from any residual contaminant of the impacted media (soil, surface

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water, groundwater or air). An electronic version of the PEA Guidance Manual is available on the State of California DTSC public web site (http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/PublicationsForms/pubs_index.cfm).

Please contact me with any questions you have regarding the investigations necessary for the proposed development area. I can be contacted at (916) 255-3707 or cparent@dtsc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Christine Parent
Project Manager
Office of Military Facilities

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