

Advancing Engagement Methodologies in Superfund Communities: A Case Study



Anna Hoover, M.A., Chike Anyaegbunam, Ph.D., Lindell Ormsbee, Ph.D.
University of Kentucky

www.paducahvision.com

Overview

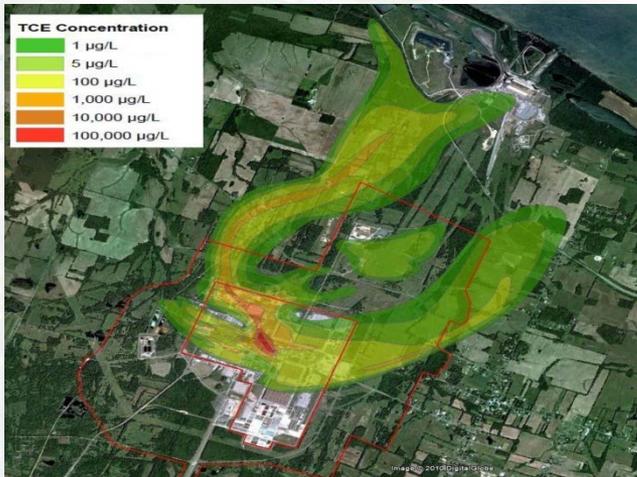
- Community-Based Participatory Communication: Goals and Tools
- Case Study: The Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant Future Vision Study
- Challenges and Future Directions for CBPC

Community-Based Participatory Communication (CBPC)

- Emerged from action and participatory research methodologies
- Focused on communicating for engagement, empowerment, collaboration, context, and trust
- Tools include visualizations, projective techniques, interviews, group work, dialogue, and ranking & scoring



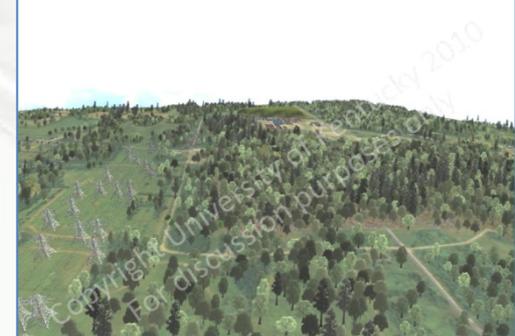
Case Study: The Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant Future Vision Study



- Only operating US uranium enrichment plant
- 1,200 workers
- \$121 million payroll
- Buffered by West Kentucky Wildlife Management Area
- TCE and Tc-99 found in nearby private drinking wells (1988)
- US EPA Superfund National Priority List (1993-94)
- Largest TCE plume in the world
- Plant scheduled to close in 5-10 years

Project Goals

- Involve communities in visioning for site remediation, use, and monitoring.
- Ensure that future use goals help advance local needs and values.



Adapting the CBPC Process

- Three-Step Process

- Interviews

Background information, concerns, opportunities, challenges, long-term visions, identification of additional stakeholders and stakeholder clusters, recruitment of community consultation panel members



- Focus Groups (with SPI*)

Perceptions of past and present engagement levels, value exercises, pilot scenario evaluations, information gaps



- Public Meetings (with SPI*)

Information sessions, scenario evaluation sessions

Outputs

- **Catalogue of Community Values**
 - *Including jobs, trust, family, safety & security, sense of community, open & honest communication, outdoor recreation opportunities, education, cultural opportunities, clean water and a healthy environment*
- **Public Information Meetings**
 - *Identified current misconceptions related to the plant; provided referenced information and identified available resources for members of the public*



Outcomes

- Increased knowledge of PGDP-related issues and available resources
- Increased awareness of pending closure and potential future uses of the site
- Mobilized community around future use issues
- Provided capacity-building experience in collaborative visioning
- Documented community values and scenario preferences for future advocacy

Challenges for Community-Based Participatory Research Practitioners



- Legacy Trust Issues
- Entrenched Belief Systems
- Competing Academic-Community Knowledges & Languages
- Evaluation
- **Institutional Barriers**

Future Directions for CBPC

- Improving our understanding of how communities construct and balance competing risks
- Creating engaged emergency response plans
- Providing opportunities for citizens to participate in the creation of state agency risk communication policies
- Informing the creation of health literacy interventions
- **Developing “lessons learned”/recommendations to address institutional barriers for participatory projects**

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