

# Community and Media Outreach as Tools in the Environmental Cleanup Program Toolbox

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# Background

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- DoD is working to complete all cleanup by 2014
- This will take both innovative technical and sociological approaches
- Cleanup projects do not take place in a vacuum
  - adjacent communities are affected
  - economic stability may be an issue
  - health and safety issues may be factors regardless of socio-economic status

# "People Problems" Can Cause Big Problems

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- People problems are often not addressed until they become obstacles
  - Can slow projects to a virtual standstill
  - Tight schedules slip
  - Costs can be significant
  - Technical decision alone making cannot solve these problems

# What Must be Recognized

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- Sound technical solutions must be properly conveyed
- The Restoration Advisory Board may not be adequately inclusive
- Perceptions drive reality
- Managers must be champions of community and media outreach programs

# Sound technical solutions must be properly conveyed

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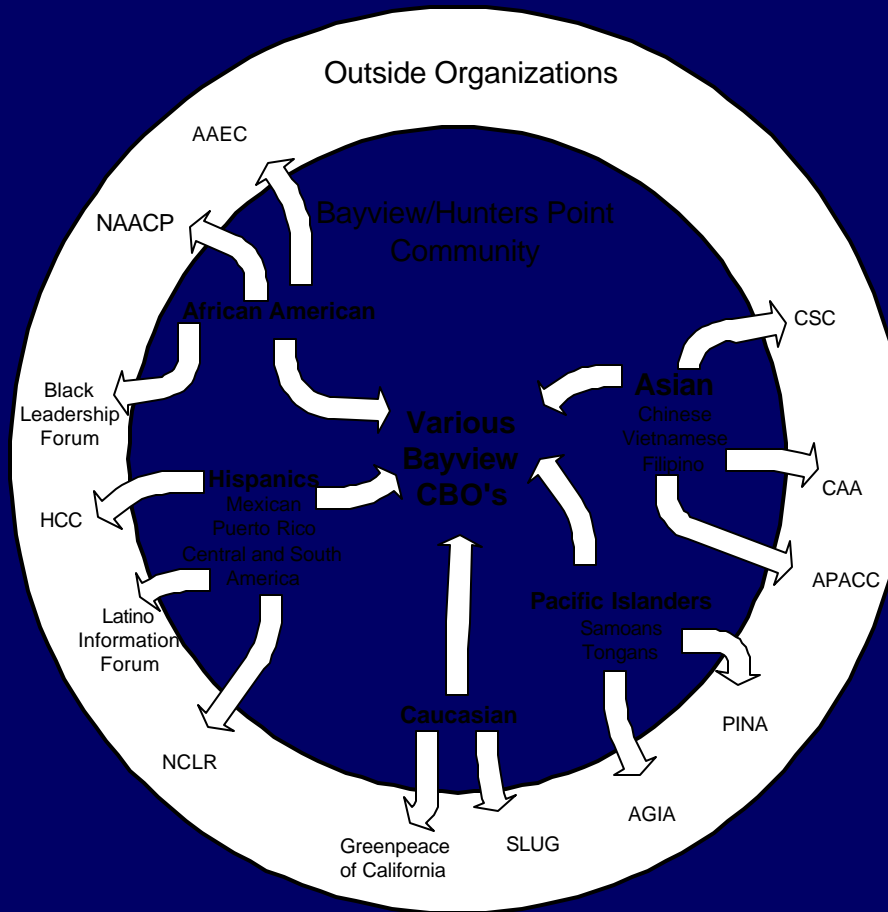
- provide information at community events
- hosting information fairs
- use plain English and provide appropriate translation into other languages
- appearing on local TV and radio

# The Restoration Advisory Board(RAB) May not be Adequately Inclusive

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- The RAB as the primary two way communication vehicle assumes
  - community is non-adversarial
  - members will be primarily English speaking
  - members will reflect the community at large
  - members will be able to understand the information provided
  - the body will be functional
- When the assumptions are not true
  - expand beyond the RAB
  - as applicable reach out to monolingual and mono-cultural communities
  - reach out to community based organizations in and outside the community, including "faith based" organizations

# Community Based Organizations and Their Associated Populations (Hunters Point Naval Shipyard Cleanup)



- AAEC**  
African American Ecumenical Council
- AGIA**  
Advocate for Grassroots Initiative Access
- APACC**  
Asian Pacific American Community Center
- CAA**  
Chinese for Affirmative Action
- CSC**  
Chinese Six Companies (Chinese Family Benevolent Associations)
- HCC**  
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- NAACP**  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- NCLR**  
National Council of La Raza
- PINA**  
Pacific Island Nurses Association
- SLUG**  
SF League of Urban Gardens

# Perceptions Drive Reality

- Understand your target audience
- Multiple approaches may be necessary
- Enlisting help from media and community outreach consults and community leaders when:
  - the cleanup project has controversial elements
  - community activists are engaged and opposed to the Military's approach
  - the local media is engaged, particularly the advocacy press and opposed to the Military's approach
  - community leaders and/or vocal residents are opposed to the Military's approach
- An effective media outreach plan should include:
  - media action timeline
  - issuance of press releases, public service announcements, etc.
  - placement of articles in local newspapers
  - responding quickly to articles/editorials
  - inviting the press to events
  - work to establish positive relationships

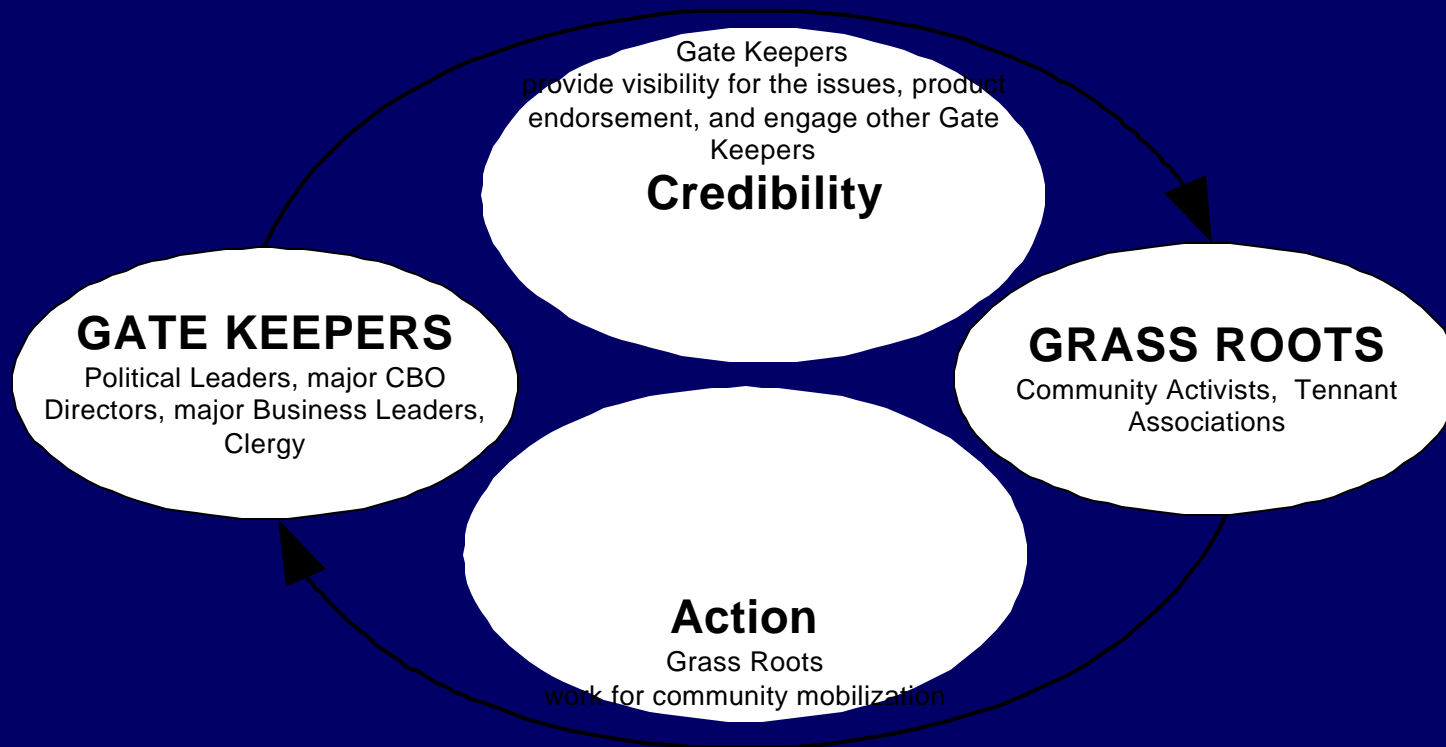


# Perceptions (cont)

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- A distrustful community tends to stay that way
- Some community leaders and/or vocal residents may be advocating mistrust
- Work to win over community leaders that will demonstrate a willingness to listen
- Some other things to consider:
  - the use of community leaders as consultants (however no conflicts of interest)
  - participate in meetings hosted by community leaders or co-host meetings
  - provide facility tours
  - expeditiously respond to queries
  - engage GateKeepers and Grass Roots leaders

# GateKeepers vs. Grass Roots



# Managers Must Champion Outreach Programs

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- Innovative outreach approaches often represent uncharted waters
- Community Relations may be adequate - works best when there is little controversy and the community is accepting of the information provided
- Community Outreach may be necessary - proactively engages the community in the communication process

# Managers (cont)

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- Why would management want to champion outreach programs
  - community is adversarial
  - elected officials involved
  - environmental activists are engaged and opposing
  - media is engaged in biased reporting

# Summary

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- Community and Media Outreach Programs can be effective tools; to maximize effectiveness the following must occur:
  - programs must be proactive
  - acknowledge and value the human factor
  - working with diverse communities requires cultural competence
  - keep the lines of communication open between all staff
  - agree on the degree of independence of any consultants
  - Community and media outreach plans must address diversity issues