Fact Sheet
Regarding Studies of Potential Health and Environmental Effects of Releases from Radford Army Ammunition Plant (RAAP) by the Ecological and Human Health in Rural Communities (EHHRC) Research Team, Global Systems Science Destination Area, Virginia Tech, March 25, 2018

Question 1: What is EHHRC doing, and why?

Answer #1
In response to concerns regarding potential environmental effects of RAAP, EHHRC has established a partnership with Pulaski County Board of Supervisors to identify areas where we may be able to provide additional information or additional interpretation of existing information.

Supporting Information regarding citizen concerns:
2. Facebook groups for Environmental Patriots of the New River Valley, Hold Radford Arsenal Accountable, and Citizens for Arsenal Accountability.
3. The Town of Blacksburg passed a resolution, 11- C-17 A RESOLUTION URGING THE RADFORD ARMY AMMUNITION PLANT TO ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS, http://blacksburg.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=20&clip_id=2071&meta_id=78672, which included the statements that:
   a. “in 2017 Montgomery County has been recognized as having the highest levels of toxic emissions in the state of Virginia as a direct result of RAAP practices,” and
   b. “the National Cancer Institute reports thyroid cancer rates in the New River Valley are among the highest in the Commonwealth and nearly two times the national rate.”
   c. The resolution
      i. “strongly urges the Department of Defense, EPA, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and other responsible agencies to immediately address impacts to air, water, soil, and human quality of life in the Town of Blacksburg and Montgomery County”;
      ii. requests that RAAP “Adequately test and model air, water, and soil within the RAAP property and surrounding area, and establish best practices to clean up all ongoing and legacy waste management operations”; and
      iii. requests that RAAP “Share all non-classified environmental and health data with the community, and establish a public data center to access, organize, map, and analyze this taxpayer-owned data.”

Answer #2
EHHRC has committed to projects that will focus on cataloging residents’ concerns, collating current and historical research and data on emissions from RAAP, examining lead levels at a nearby farm, and determining levels of organic compounds in air at nearby properties.

Supporting information regarding past, present, and future data:
2. EHHRC affiliates are currently conducting a pilot project at Kentland Farm, examining lead and heavy metals in the air and soil, collecting blood samples from cattle to assess levels of lead and of transthyretin, a hormone linked to the thyroid.
3. In Fall 2018, EHHRC affiliates will collaboratively teach APS 4094: Appalachian Community Research at Virginia Tech. Students will:
   a. Catalogue residents’ concerns about the Radford arsenal
   b. Identify, collate, and write a literature review of existing relevant studies and data. Rural Environments affiliates will vet the students’ work and produce a white paper summarizing findings and communicating the most compelling avenues for next steps.
   c. Conduct air sampling for carcinogenic organic compounds and possibly also for lead on up to 10 properties in the vicinity of RAAP at the request of residents.
   d. Make presentations to the Appalachian Regional Commission in Washington, DC, and to local community partners and will also attempt to disseminate findings more broadly (for example, via the web).

Question 2: Does RAAP know you are doing this? Are you working with them?

Answer #1
As part of this effort, EHHRC and our community partners reached out to RAAP to open lines of communication and understanding. RAAP Deputy to the Commander Rob Davie responded with interest in cooperating and an invitation to tour RAAP.

Supporting Information regarding communication between EHHRC and RAAP:
   1. On February 16, 2018, EHHRC affiliates and representatives of the Pulaski County and Montgomery County Boards of Supervisors met with RAAP personnel, including commander Lt. Col. James Scott, on site at RAAP and toured the facility.
      a. Pulaski County Board of Supervisor Joe Guthrie asked LTC Scott if he assented to EHHRC’s research efforts and LTC Scott said yes, under the condition that VT affiliates communicate all proposed objects of study, plans of study, and findings.
      b. Researchers agreed to LTC Scott’s request that VT affiliates communicate all proposed objects of study, plans of study, and findings.
   2. In February 2018, EHHRC affiliates agreed to assist RAAP with validating ambient monitor locations and selecting the best technology to use for collecting samples.

Question 3: What do you expect to find?

Answer #1
We expect to gain a better understanding of community concerns regarding RAAP.

Answer #2
We expect to gain a better understanding of levels of air pollutants in areas near RAAP.

Answer #3
We may gain a better understanding regarding compelling avenues for future research.