

HUDSON RIVER PCBs SUPERFUND SITE

New York



February 1991

HUDSON RIVER PCBs REASSESSMENT RI/FS

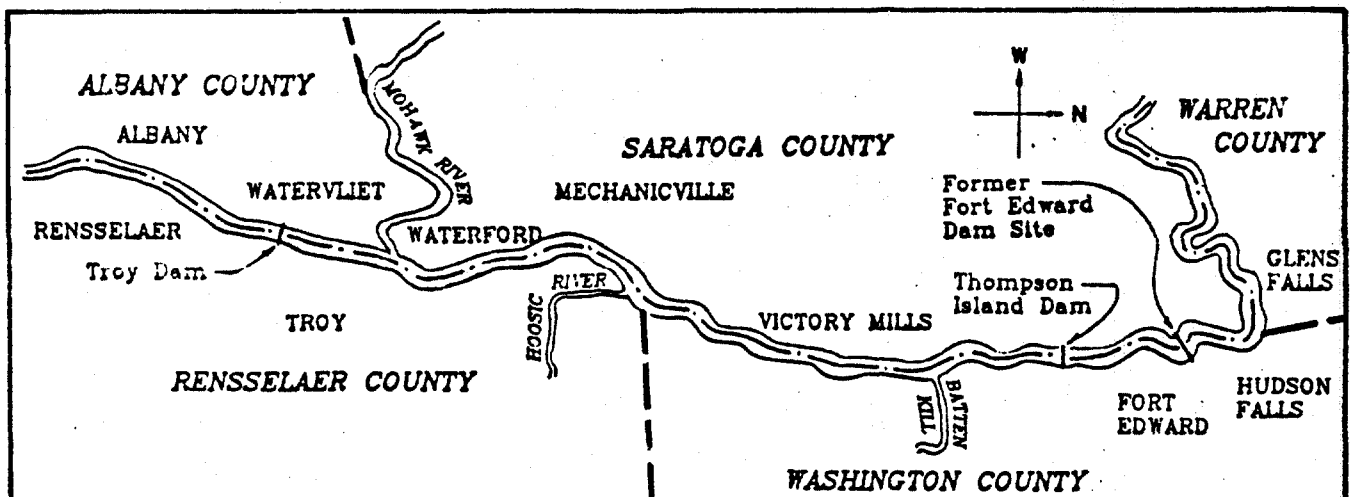
During a 30-year period ending in 1977, it is estimated that approximately 1.1 million pounds of PCBs were discharged into the Hudson River from two General Electric Company (GE) capacitor manufacturing plants located in Fort Edward and Hudson Falls, New York. Much of these PCBs adhered to sediments which accumulated behind the Fort Edward Dam. Consequently, when the deteriorating dam was removed in 1973, the PCB-contaminated sediments were allowed to be transported downstream. Studies conducted to evaluate the extent of the problem revealed that most of the contaminated sediments were in 40 "hot spots" which were situated in a 40-mile stretch of the river between Fort Edward and Troy.

In 1976, the NYSDEC banned all fishing in the upper Hudson River, from the Troy dam north through Fort Edward, because PCB levels in Hudson River fish were in excess of Food and Drug Administration limitations. The ban is still in effect today. In addition, there is a commercial fishing ban in the lower Hudson River for certain species (e.g., striped bass).

In 1983, it was determined that the problem rated high enough to be considered for inclusion on the Superfund National Priorities List (NPL). In September 1984, EPA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) for the Hudson River PCBs site. Among the decisions in the ROD was the selection of an interim No Action alternative for the PCB-contaminated river sediments.

In December 1989, EPA announced that it would reassess the No Action decision for the river sediments in the 1984 ROD. The determination to conduct the reassessment was based on additional data developed by New York State with respect to the movement and persistence of the PCBs in the sediments, the advances in technologies for treating PCB-contaminated materials, amendments to the Superfund law in 1986 which give preference to permanent remedies, and EPA's policy to conduct five-year reviews of remedial actions in which hazardous substances remain on site.

EPA issued a Scope of Work (SOW) for the Reassessment Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (Reassessment RI/FS) in December 1990. The SOW outlined a three-phase approach to the project. In addition, a Community Interaction Program (CIP) was developed to support public participation in the Reassessment RI/FS, and both plans were presented at a public meeting held in Saratoga Springs, NY, on December 13, 1990. Highlights of the work to be conducted during the first phase can be found on page 2 of this Update. The CIP is described on page 3.



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The Scope of Work for the Reassessment RI/FS involves three phases, as shown below. The Work Plan for Phase 1 was issued in January 1991 and is available in the information repositories listed on page 4. The Phase 1 Work Plan details the six tasks involved in the first phase of work. Detailed work plans will be developed to describe the work in the following phases as the project progresses. The highlights of Phase 1 are shown below, along with the outline for Phases 2 and 3.

PHASE 1 - PRELIMINARY REASSESSMENT

TASK 1 - SITE CHARACTERIZATION AND DATA SYNTHESIS

Upper Hudson

- Obtain and evaluate river monitoring data
- Develop a comprehensive computer database
- Conduct statistical evaluations, mass load calculations, and PCB dechlorination evaluations
- Prepare data inventories necessary for risk assessment

Lower Hudson

- Inventory available data and data sources
- Identify assessment strategies for Phase 2

TASK 2 - EVALUATION OF FISH AND FOOD CHAIN BIOACCUMULATION (UPPER HUDSON)

- Evaluate existing bioaccumulation models
- Develop additional models as required
- Develop an empirically-supported (data-derived) assessment of PCB bioaccumulation in fish, based on available data
- Identify other bioaccumulation pathways and environmentally sensitive species
- Identify future data requirements

TASK 3 - PCB TRANSPORT MODEL (UPPER HUDSON)

- Develop a PCB transport model to predict sediment transport and migration of sediment "hot spots"
- Incorporate results in bioaccumulation models as appropriate
- Assess sediment and PCB mass loading in the lower Hudson

TASK 4 - PREPARE A BASELINE RISK ASSESSMENT

- Perform a baseline human health evaluation to assess exposure to PCBs from the upper Hudson River
- Perform a baseline ecological risk assessment in the upper Hudson (assess effects of PCBs on aquatic and fish-consuming terrestrial species, identify sensitive ecological receptors)

TASK 5 - ARAR IDENTIFICATION AND REMEDIAL TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT (UPPER HUDSON)

- Develop a complete list of federal and state applicable and relevant and appropriate requirements (ARARs)
- Develop and screen a list of potentially viable remedial alternatives

TASK 6 - REPORTS

- Phase 1 - Preliminary Report
- Work Plan and Sampling Plan for Phase 2

PHASE 2 - FURTHER SITE CHARACTERIZATION AND ANALYSIS

- TASK 1 - FIELD SAMPLING AND SURVEYS (optional)
- TASK 2 - MODELING
- TASK 3 - BIOTREATMENT STUDY REVIEW
- TASK 4 - NYSDEC ACTIVITIES OVERSIGHT
- TASK 5 - TREATABILITY STUDIES (optional)

PHASE 3 - FEASIBILITY STUDY

- TASK 1 - REMEDIAL ALTERNATIVES SCREENING
- TASK 2 - DETAILED EVALUATION
- TASK 3 - REASSESSMENT REPORT

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OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY INTERACTION PROGRAM

Several factors, particularly the large geographic area involved and the high level of public interest already evident, led the EPA to develop an expanded approach to community relations for the Hudson River PCB Reassessment RI/FS.

The resulting program, called the Community Interaction Program (CIP), is designed to provide an opportunity for all interested parties to have access to the PCB reassessment process, to provide the public the opportunity to raise its concerns, questions, and issues regarding the study, and to maintain a two-way flow of information between the public and the management of the project.

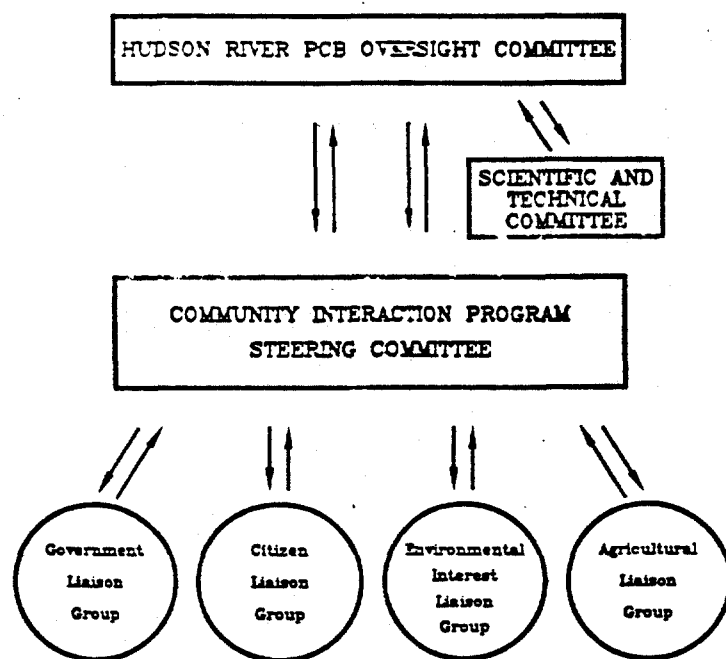
The CIP's tiered committee/liaison group structure is unique to this Superfund site. This structure was developed for this site because EPA anticipates a high level of interest from the public, and wishes to accommodate the participation of all, while still being manageable. It was conceived as a flexible program, able to respond to the needs of the project. In fact, in response to requests made during the December 1990 public meeting, an Agricultural Liaison Group was added to the process (joining the Governmental, Environmental Interest and Citizen Liaison Groups).

The liaison groups are working groups which will represent the interests of the public. These groups, whose membership is open to anyone interested in participating, will feed information, comments and questions from the public to the Steering Committee. The groups will review project documents and will direct their comments and questions on those documents to the Steering Committee, also. Letters were mailed in January 1991 to over 500 people, inviting participation in the liaison group appropriately representing their interest.

The Steering Committee ensures 1) that input from the groups is forwarded to the management of the reassessment process via the Hudson River PCB Oversight Committee, which will assist in the management of the project, and 2) that timely responses are returned to the groups. The Steering Committee, in fact, is the focal point for the two-way flow of information between the public and the project managers that is so important in this reassessment process. Liaison Groups, the Steering Committee, and the Oversight Committee will meet regularly throughout the project.

HUDSON RIVER PCBs REASSESSMENT RI/FS

COMMUNITY INTERACTION PROGRAM (CIP)



Steering Committee Members

1. EPA Community Relations Coordinator (Chair)
2. EPA Project Manager
3. TAMS Technical Representative
4. NYSDEC Project Manager
5. NYSDEC Citizen Participation Specialist
- 6.-14. Liaison Group Chair and 2 Co-chairs

Hudson River PCB Oversight Committee Members

1. EPA ERRD Deputy Division Director (Chair)
- 2.-3. NYSDEC
4. NYS Dept. of Health
5. NYS Dept. of Transportation
6. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ASTDR)
7. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
8. US DOI (Fish and Wildlife)
9. Army Corps of Engineers
10. General Electric Technical Rep
11. TAMS Technical Representative
12. Hudson River PCB Scientific and Technical Committee Chairperson
- 13.-16. CIP Chairpeople (Steering Committee and Liaison Group Chairpeople)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Under the Superfund law, citizens living near a Superfund site and whose health and economic well being are directly affected by that site are eligible to receive a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) from EPA. These grants of up to \$50,000 per site enable a citizens' group to hire a consultant to interpret information generated about the site. For additional information, contact Marilyn Fast, TAG Coordinator, USEPA Region II, Grant Administration Branch, 26 Federal Plaza, New York, NY 10278. Her telephone number is (212) 264-8786.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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New York, NY 10278
(212) 264-7508

INFORMATION REPOSITORIES HUDSON RIVER PCBs REASSESSMENT RI/FS

ADRIANCE MEMORIAL LIBRARY
93 MARKET STREET
POUGHKEEPSIE, NY 12601

COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE
WASHINGTON COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING
UPPER BROADWAY
FORT EDWARD, NY 12828

CRANDALL LIBRARY
CITY PARK
GLENS FALLS, NY 12801

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FORT EDWARD TOWN HALL
118 BROADWAY
FORT EDWARD, NY 12828

NEW YORK STATE LIBRARY
CEC EMPIRE PLAZA
ALBANY, NY 12230

SARATOGA SPRINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY
320 BROADWAY
SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY 12866

TROY PUBLIC LIBRARY
100 SECOND STREET
TROY, NY 12180

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NEW PALTZ, NY 12561

REGION 4
2176 GUILDERLAND AVENUE
SCHENECTADY, NY 12406

REGION 5
ROUTE 86
RAY BROOK, NY 12977

DIVISION OF HAZARDOUS WASTE REMEDIATION
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