



Eastern Research Group, Inc.

## - M E M O R A N D U M -

**DATE:**

**TO:**

**FROM:** Tom DeCoff

**RE:** Peer Review of Hudson River PCBs Reassessment Reports

---

Eastern Research Group, Inc. (ERG), under contract to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), is in the process of identifying experts who might be appropriate to peer review documents on the Hudson River PCB Reassessment. After reviewing the qualifications of potential reviewers, ERG will propose five to seven experts to participate in the review. The following is additional background information and an availability form and a conflict of interest screen to fill out and return to ERG as soon as possible.

### BACKGROUND

During a 30-year period ending in 1977, approximately 1.1 million pounds of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were discharged into the Hudson River from two General Electric (GE) capacitor manufacturing plants located in Fort Edward and Hudson Falls, New York. PCBs are classified by the EPA as probable human carcinogens.

A 197-mile stretch of the Hudson River from Hudson Falls to the Battery in New York City was classified as a Superfund site in 1983. EPA made an interim no-action decision in 1984. In 1990, EPA began the reassessment of the PCB-contaminated sediments in the upper Hudson River. Due to the size, complexity, and high level of public interest in this project, EPA decided to conduct the study in three phases, issuing reports to the public as the work progressed. Phase 2, the largest in scope, was further broken down into six segments. EPA's eventual remedial decision for this site will depend on the information contained in all three phases of the project and in all associated reports, and how that information fits together as a whole.

This project entails the review of one of the six Phase 2 Reassessment Reports, the *Baseline Modeling Report* (BMR). The BMR, released in May 1999, will provide projections of future concentrations of PCBs in water, sediment, and fish tissue without remediation; will include the interpretation of the low resolution sediment coring data; and will provide interested parties an opportunity to review the baseline model projections prior to their incorporation into the human health and ecological risk assessments. More information on Phase 2 Reassessment Reports can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/region02/superfund/hudson/reas-rpts.htm>.

## REVIEWER RESPONSIBILITIES

Each reviewer will be allotted 100 hours to:

- Participate in one conference call, if requested, with ERG and EPA to discuss the peer review, the deliverables, and the agendas for the meetings.
- Review and evaluate the BMR. Prepare detailed written comments on the report that responds to the charge, specific questions, and instructions for the reviewers by March 2000.
- Denote and, if practical, provide a copy of any relevant research that is not included in the report.
- If significant problems are observed in the use of appropriate EPA methodologies, provide specific comments, in writing, describing the problems and making appropriate suggestions. Reviewer suggestions should be specific, clear and without any ambiguity, and must conform to existing EPA Methodologies and Guidelines.
- Provide all substantial comments and inserts in typed hard copy and on a diskette prepared using WordPerfect by March 2000.
- Attend and actively participate in two meetings. The first is a 2-day briefing meeting and site visit to be held near the city of Albany, New York, on December 8 and 9, 1999. The next meeting will be held over 2 days between January and March 2000, in or around Saratoga or Albany, New York.

Please understand that this inquiry does not imply a commitment on ERG's part to use your services for this review, rather this inquiry provides us with information on your interest, availability, and qualifications to perform the review. Conversely, ERG understands that your response to our availability inquiry does not imply a commitment on your part at this time to perform the review. We hope to make our final selection of participants in April 1999. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Tom DeCoff at 781-674-7377 (phone), [tdecoff@erg.com](mailto:tdecoff@erg.com) (e-mail), or 781-674-2851 (fax). I look forward to your response. Thank you.

**Peer Review of Hudson River PCBs Reassessment  
RI/FS Phase 2 Report  
Baseline Modeling Report**

---

**AVAILABILITY FORM**

Please fill out both pages of the availability form and respond to all of the questions below, and fax your response to 781-674-2851, Attention: Tom DeCoff.

**Please fill out the following information for our records:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: (No P.O. Boxes): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Questions:**

1. Are you interested in participating in the project?                      **Yes    No    Maybe**

**If yes, please send us your current resume/CV. You may fax, email, or mail us a copy.**

2. Are you able to attend the preliminary meeting scheduled for December 8 and 9, 1999; review the Baseline Modeling Report document; and attend the 2-day peer review meeting sometime over the months of January, February, and March 2000 in the Albany, New York area; for a total of 100 hours of work?

Yes      No

Please circle the days you will **NOT** be available between January and March 2000 to attend the peer review meeting in the Albany area:

January 2000					February 2000					March 2000				
M	T	W	R	F	M	T	W	R	F	M	T	W	R	F
3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4			1	2	3
10	11	12	13	14	7	8	9	10	11	6	7	8	9	10
17	18	19	20	21	14	15	16	17	18	13	14	15	16	17
24	25	26	27	28	21	22	23	24	25	20	21	22	23	24
31					28	29				27	28	29	30	31

3. Please indicate your level of expertise by placing an H = High degree; M = Medium degree; or L = Low degree of expertise by each of the categories listed below:

- a) \_\_\_ Familiarity with PCBs
- b) \_\_\_ Mass Balance Modeling
- c) \_\_\_ Aquatic Food Chain Modeling
- d) \_\_\_ Sediment Fate and Transport Modeling
- e) \_\_\_ Hydrology

4. Do you have any potential conflicts of interest (COI) in performing this task? Please fill out the attached COI screening form.

5. If you are selected, would a fee be required?      Yes      No

If yes, is the EPA authorized rate of xx/hour acceptable?      Yes      No

If not, what is your lowest government rate?

Consultants will be requested to review the reports and background information, prepare a written summary of their comments, and attend two meetings to discuss the reports, for a total of 100 hours of work.

6. Other comments:

I look forward to receiving this information from you as soon as possible. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Tom DeCoff at 781-674-7377 (phone), tdecoff@erg.com, (e-mail), or 781-674-2851 (fax). Thank you.

**Peer Review of Hudson River PCBs Reassessment  
RI/FS Phase 2 Report  
Baseline Modeling Report**

---

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST SCREEN**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Financial/Professional Affiliation(s): \_\_\_\_\_

---

Note: An "independent peer reviewer" is an expert who was not associated with the generation of the specific work products (i.e., the Baseline Modeling Report or any other reports generated as part of the Hudson River PCBs Reassessment) either directly or by substantial contribution to their development or indirectly by consultation during the development of the specific product.

1. Are you currently employed by General Electric (GE) or have you or your company or organization received any funding, grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements from GE?
2. Are you currently employed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or have you or your company or organization received any funding, grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements from EPA?
3. Have you been associated with the generation of the specific work products directly or by substantial contribution to their development?
4. Have you been associated with the generation of the specific work products indirectly by significant consultation during the development of these specific products?
5. Have you been associated with a party which is directly involved in the Hudson River Reassessment site, including the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and TAMS Consultants?
6. Are there any other personal or professional circumstances that might pose a potential conflict of interest for your participation in reviewing this report?
7. Do you read, converse, and write in English fluently?

I certify that the above responses are true and understand that I am under an ongoing obligation to notify Eastern Research Group of any real or perceived conflict of interest throughout the peer review process.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date