



**Stephen D. Ramsey**  
Vice President-Corporate Environmental Programs

May 10, 1999

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**Privileged and Confidential  
Attorney-Client Communication  
Attorney Work Product**

Ms. Jeanne Fox  
Regional Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 2  
26 Federal Plaza  
New York, NY 10007

U.S. EPA, REGION II  
EMER. & REM. RES. DIV.  
1999 MAY 12 PM 4:25  
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Re: Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site

Dear Ms. Fox:

When we met in April, I told you we would be releasing our model in the near future. I enclose three volumes and an executive summary of GE's model for the Upper Hudson River. This model is the result of almost a decade of work and uses thousands of pieces of data. Peer reviewers of this model have described it as "the most accurate and predictive model available, not only on the Hudson but on any water body in the country."

GE retained Quantitative Environmental Analysis ("QEA") and its respected modeling expert, Dr. John P. Connolly, to prepare a PCB fate, transport and bioaccumulation model intended to answer the same questions as will be posed to EPA's model and to assist EPA in reaching the most scientifically credible decision on the Hudson River.

The model's principal conclusion is that there is virtually no difference in the length of time it will take for fish in the Upper River to reach the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) 2 parts per million (ppm) safety threshold as a result of the ongoing natural recovery processes compared with dredging.

The other important conclusions of GE's model are:

— Average PCB levels in fish from Schuylerville to Troy will reach the FDA safety threshold of 2 ppm by 2000 through natural processes, before EPA's June 2001 decision on the Upper River. This accounts for 75% of the Upper Hudson River.

— Average PCB levels in largemouth bass between Fort Edward and Schuylerville will reach the FDA limit by 2010 through natural processes at virtually the same time as dredging, even using more optimistic assumptions than EPA has recently used about the rate of dredging in this area of the river.

US EPA

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— The “100-year flood,” feared for its potential to stir up buried PCBs, would have virtually no impact on PCB levels in fish in 85 percent of the Upper Hudson and limited impact in the other 15 percent of the Upper Hudson.

The model assumed dredging would begin in 2005 and that the speed of dredging would be twice as fast as EPA’s estimate for dredging in the same part of the river.

All of the scenarios were compared against “No Action,” meaning no additional reduction in PCBs coming from the Hudson Falls area. As you know, GE has vigorously pursued source control in the vicinity of the Hudson Falls plant and continues to do so. The model we provide you with today will allow estimation of how much that remedial work has already accelerated the recovery of the river.

Because of the importance of both the GE and EPA models to your agency’s decision, we ask that both models be peer reviewed at the same time by the same independent experts empaneled by your contractor last summer to scrutinize the Preliminary Model Calibration Report. The experience of these scientists in reviewing EPA’s model and their familiarity with the important modeling issues at this site make them well qualified to review the GE model.

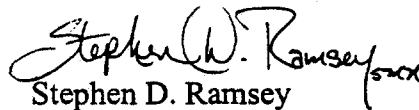
We believe our request is the best and fairest way to evaluate these models. It will ensure that the very best science is brought to bear in selecting the right remedial scenario for the Hudson River. GE, of course, would pay the costs for this additional work.

Such a peer review should be open to all interested parties and significant opportunity for interaction with the peer review panel must be provided to avoid the inadequate and unfair process which was used for the review of EPA’s Low Resolution Coring Report in March. The importance of the models to the outcome of EPA’s decision makes it imperative that a fair, open and thorough process be utilized.

I look forward to hearing from you with regard to the peer review. In addition, we are available to provide you and or your staff with a thorough review of the GE model and respond to your questions at any time it is convenient. We would, of course, make our modeling experts available for such a meeting.

Please make this a part of the administrative record.

Sincerely,

  
Stephen D. Ramsey

cc: Richard Caspe, EPA  
William McCabe, EPA  
Attachments