

MAY 15 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Record
FROM: Dona deLeon
RE: Hudson River PCB Dredging

On Monday, May 14, two members of the New York legislature, Richard Brodsky and John J. McEneny met with Administrator Whitman regarding the above issue. Also present were EPA staff members Mark Flory, Richard Caspe and Steve Luftig.

Assemblyman Brodsky opened the meeting by requesting that the Administrator use her authority in CERCLA which provides funding for a community relations plan more fully to educate the public on why the Hudson should be dredged. He believes this additional EPA outreach is necessary in order to balance General Electric's (GE) public relations campaign totaling about \$40 to \$60 million. He further stated that the GE public relations action was unprecedented in crossing the line from educating the public to lobbying, and that EPA institutional concerns were being drowned out by the GE campaign.

The Administrator responded that she believed the use of federal funds for a media lobbying campaign would be difficult, even though conceptually the request is a defensible one. Further, it would require substantial funds to counter the GE campaign. Rich Caspe from EPA Region II generally discussed the community relations plan that they conducted which totaled somewhere in the six figures range, and generally noted that the agency cannot fund public outreach for any one position.

Assemblyman Brodsky ended the meeting noting that he would send a letter to the Agency relative to EPA's authority under CERCLA to fund public outreach. He was concerned that this same public relations strategy at some point could occur at the other GE sites around the country. The Administrator commented that EPA General Counsel would review that authority in response to the Assemblyman's letter.