



## UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2  
290 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

10.5453

JUL 16 1997

70087

Peter J. Telisky  
Supervisor, Town of Whitehall  
142 Main Street  
Whitehall, NY 12887

Dear Mr. Telisky:

This is in response to your letters of June 13, 1997 to EPA Administrator, Carol Browner and myself, regarding the Hudson River PCBs site. Your letters forward a copy of a recent Resolution by the Town of Whitehall in which the Town expresses its opposition to any remediation measures for the site that involve the dredging of PCB-contaminated sediments from the Hudson River and the disposal of these sediments in a landfill.

EPA is aware of the concerns of a number of members of the Upper Hudson River community associated with potential dredging of PCB-contaminated sediments from the Upper Hudson River. As you know, EPA has not yet determined whether it will be appropriate or necessary to dredge Hudson River sediments in order to address PCB contamination in the Upper Hudson River. Such a decision will be made only after EPA completes its Reassessment study of the Hudson River PCBs site which, when completed, will include a detailed characterization of the PCB contamination in the Upper Hudson River and the risks associated with that contamination. EPA also will prepare and release for public comment a Feasibility Study in which the Agency will evaluate several remedial options for the River sediments, including "no-action" and various dredging alternatives. "Community acceptance" is one of the criteria that must be considered by EPA when the Agency ultimately makes a remedial decision for the Upper Hudson River sediments and, while EPA cannot sacrifice protection of human health and the environment in favor of community acceptance, public comments can play a significant role in EPA's ultimate remedial decision.

In March 1996, Doug Tomchuk and Ann Rychlenski of my staff made a presentation to the Washington County Board of Supervisors on the Hudson River PCBs Reassessment study. EPA is willing to make additional presentations to the Board of Supervisors, or a similar group, to keep you informed of the findings of the Reassessment. Please contact Ms. Rychlenski at (212) 637-3672 if you wish to arrange for such a briefing.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jeanne M. Fox

Jeanne M. Fox  
Regional Administrator

SYMBOL -->	SP/CT	SP/CT	ORC	ERRD	ERRD	CD	DRA	RA
SURNAME -->	TOMCHUK	HAUPTMAN	ASCHON	McCABE	FEASPE	BELLOW	MUSZYNSKI	FOX
DATE -->	7/2/97 DJT	7/10/97	7/9/97	7/9/97	7/9			

cc: John Cahill, Commissioner NYSDEC  
Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan  
Senator Alphonse D'Amato  
Congressman Gerald B. Solomon  
Governor George Pataki  
NYS Senator Ronald B. Stafford  
NYS Assemblyman Bobby D'Andrea  
NYS Assemblywoman Elizabeth Little  
NYS Assemblyman Richard L. Brodsky

bcc: OEX  
Ann Rychlenski, CD  
Paul Simon, ORC

## **TOWN OF WHITEHALL**

**142 MAIN STREET**

**WHITEHALL, N.Y. 12887**

**PHONE:(518)499-1535 FAX:(518)499-1546**

**Supervisor, Peter J. Telisky**

**Deputy Supervisor, James F. Alkon**

**Councilman, John Mallonee**

**Councilman, Emerson F. Bartholomew, Jr.**

**Councilman, Richard LaChapelle**

**Town Clerk, Kim M. Kingsley**

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**June 13, 1997**

**Ms. Carol Browner Administrator  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
401 M Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20460**

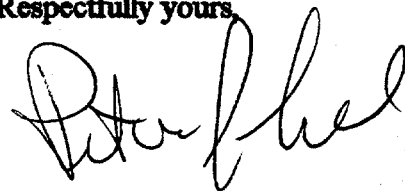
**Dear Ms. Browner :**

I would like to take this opportunity to elicit your help in opposing the dredging of the Upper Hudson River of PCB's. Not only would this dredging be counter-productive, but would have a long-lasting adverse affect on several surrounding Washington County communities.

Please find enclosed Resolution #27 of 1997 passed by the Town Board of the Town of Whitehall on June 5, 1997.

Again, thank you in advance for your support of all of us up here in Washington County.

**Respectfully yours**



**Peter J. Telisky  
Supervisor**

**encl:**

Resolution No: 27

Introduced by: Peter J. Telisky

Motion by: Emerson Bartholomew, Jr.

Seconded by: John Molinero

CARRIED: UNANIMOUSLY

**TITLED:** Opposing Dredging of the Upper Hudson River and Creation of a Toxic Waste Landfill

**WHEREAS,** the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is reassessing its 1984 decision not to dredge the Upper Hudson River to remove buried sediment containing PCB's, and

**WHEREAS,** the EPA has recently released a report that suggests the Agency may be preparing to reverse its position and order dredging, and

**WHEREAS,** PCB landfill projects have twice before been proposed for agricultural properties in the Town of Fort Edward and have twice been stopped through legal action, political action and the vigilance of citizens of Fort Edward, Washington County and surrounding communities, and

**WHEREAS,** the Town Board of the Town of Fort Edward has steadfastly opposed Upper Hudson River remediation options that involve PCB dredge-and-landfill projects of any kind, and has asked other municipalities to join Fort Edward in opposition to such projects based on their negative regional impacts, and

**WHEREAS,** a PCB dredge-and-landfill project would have significant, long-term adverse environmental, economic and social consequences for all Upper Hudson River communities, especially affecting the agricultural industry, which depends on consumer confidence in the purity of its products, confidence likely to be undermined by the presence of a hazardous waste landfill; and especially impairing the continuing efforts to make local communities attractive places to live, work and raise families because a PCB landfill would destroy forever the pastoral quality of life that is our greatest asset, and

**WHEREAS,** a Hudson River dredging project would disrupt normal recreational use of the river and jeopardize future public and private investments in river-related amenities affecting the entire Upper Hudson region, and

**WHEREAS,** the mere possibility of a PCB dredge-and-landfill project adversely affects land values throughout the Upper Hudson region and discourages private investment that might lead to the creation of new jobs, and

**WHEREAS,** representatives of Washington County and many local governments have taken an active role in EPA's public meetings and have repeatedly asked EPA to evaluate all of the adverse impacts of a PCB landfill on the resources and economy of the county, and

**WHEREAS,** EPA has conducted no such evaluation and has made no commitment to conduct such an evaluation before any decision to establish a PCB landfill is reached, and

WHEREAS, a significant body of scientific evidence demonstrates that conditions in the Hudson River are improving, with PCB levels declining in water, sediment and fish, such that the State of New York has reopened the catch-and-release fishery in the Upper River, and

WHEREAS, dredging contaminated sediments has been shown to be ineffective in improving environmental conditions elsewhere, and

WHEREAS, there is no credible scientific evidence that dredging sediments from the bottom of the Hudson River would significantly accelerate the improvements already taking place as a result of ongoing remediation work and the river's natural recovery processes, and

WHEREAS, EPA itself determined in 1984 that a major dredging project "could be environmentally devastating to the river ecosystem and cannot be considered to adequately protect the environment," (USEPA, Superfund Record of Decision at Page 8) and determined that "the actual reliability and effectiveness of current dredging technologies in this particular situation is subject to considerable uncertainty," (Decision at Page 11), and

WHEREAS, EPA recognized that the many tons of material to be removed in a dredging project would require an "impractically large containment facility" (Decision at Page 8), and

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Whitehall finds there is no demonstrated environmental benefit to a dredge-and-landfill project on the Hudson River and many unmitigated long-term negative environmental, economic and social consequences affecting the entire region, and

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Whitehall finds that a dredge-and-landfill project would be a gross, unwarranted and unnecessary insult to the Hudson River itself and the communities of the Upper Hudson region, now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Whitehall, in concert with the Town Board of the Town of Fort Edward, hereby expresses its opposition to Hudson River remediation measures that involve dredge-and-landfill efforts of any kind and hereby transmits notice of such opposition, in writing, to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner; Region II USEPA Administrator Jeanne M. Fox; U.S. Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan and U.S. Sen. Alphonse D'Amato; U.S. Rep. Gerald B. Solomon; New York Gov. George E. Pataki; Acting New York State Environmental Conservation Commissioner John Cahill; New York State Sen. Ronald B. Stafford, and New York State Assemblyman Bobby D'Andrea and New York State Assemblywoman Elizabeth Little.

Peter J. Telisky, Supervisor:

James F. Aiken, Councilman:

John Molinero, Councilman:

Emerson F. Bartholomew, Jr., Councilman:

Richard LaChapelle, Councilman:

Resolution Opposing Dredging of the Upper Hudson River  
and Creation of a Toxic Waste Landfill

WHEREAS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is reassessing its 1984 decision not to dredge the Upper Hudson River to remove buried sediment containing PCBs, and

WHEREAS, the EPA has recently released a report that suggests the Agency may be preparing to reverse its position and order dredging, and

WHEREAS, PCB landfill projects have twice before been proposed for agricultural properties in the Town of Fort Edward and have twice been stopped through legal action, political action and the vigilance of citizens of Fort Edward, Washington County and surrounding communities, and

WHEREAS, a PCB dredge-and-landfill project would have significant, long-term adverse environmental, economic and social consequences for all Upper Hudson River communities, especially affecting the agricultural industry, which depends on consumer confidence in the purity of its products, confidence likely to be undermined by the presence of a hazardous waste landfill; and especially impairing the continuing efforts to make local communities attractive places to live, work and raise families because a PCB landfill would destroy forever the pastoral quality of life that is our greatest asset, and

WHEREAS, a Hudson River dredging project would disrupt normal recreational use of the river and jeopardize future public and private investments in river-related amenities affecting the entire Upper Hudson region, and

WHEREAS, the mere possibility of a PCB dredge-and-landfill project adversely affects land values throughout the Upper Hudson region and discourages private investment that might lead to the creation of new jobs, and

WHEREAS, representatives of Washington County and many local governments have taken an active role in EPA's public meetings and have repeatedly asked EPA to evaluate all of the adverse impacts of a PCB landfill on the resources and economy of the County, and

WHEREAS, EPA has conducted no such evaluation and has made no commitment to conduct such an evaluation before any decision to establish a PCB landfill is reached, and

WHEREAS, a significant body of scientific evidence demonstrates that conditions in the Hudson River are improving, with PCB levels declining in water, sediment and fish, such that the State of New York has reopened the catch-and-release fishery in the Upper River, and

WHEREAS, dredging contaminated sediments has been shown to be ineffective in improving environmental conditions elsewhere, and

WHEREAS, there is no credible scientific evidence that dredging sediments from the bottom of the Hudson River would significantly accelerate the improvements already taking place as a result of ongoing remediation work and the river's natural recovery processes, and

WHEREAS, EPA itself determined in 1984 that a major dredging project "could be environmentally devastating to the river ecosystem and cannot be considered to adequately protect the environment," (USEPA, Superfund Record of Decision at Page 8) and determined that "the actual reliability and effectiveness of current dredging technologies in this particular situation is subject to considerable uncertainty," (Decision at Page 11), and

WHEREAS, EPA recognized that the many tons of material to be removed in a dredging project would require an "impractically large containment facility" (Decision at Page 8), and

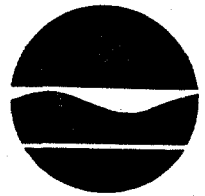
WHEREAS, the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Whitehall find there is no demonstrated environmental benefit to a dredge-and-landfill project on the Hudson River and many unmitigated long-term negative environmental, economic and social consequences affecting the entire region, and

WHEREAS, the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Whitehall finds that a dredge-and-landfill project would be a gross, unwarranted and unnecessary insult to the Hudson River itself and the communities of the Upper Hudson region, now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Whitehall in concert with the Town Board of the Town of Fort Edward, hereby expresses its opposition to Hudson River remediation measures that involve dredge-and-landfill efforts of any kind and hereby transmits notice of such opposition, in writing, to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner; Region II USEPA Administrator Jeanne M. Fox; U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and U.S. Senator Alphonse D'Amato; U.S. Representative Gerald B. Solomon; New York Governor George E. Pataki; Acting New York State Environmental Conservation Commissioner John Cahill; New York State Senator Ronald B. Stafford; New York State Assemblyman Bobby D'Andrea and New York State Assemblywoman Elizabeth Little.

**New York State Department of Environmental Conservation**

Environmental Quality  
Route 86 - PO Box 296  
Ray Brook, NY 12977 - 0296



(518) 897-1241  
(518) 897-1245 (Fax)

John P. Cahill  
Acting Commissioner

June 25, 1997

Peter J. Telisky, Supervisor  
Town of Whitehall  
142 Main Street  
Whitehall, NY 12887

Re: Resolution

Dear Supervisor Telisky:

Commissioner Cahill asked me to respond to the Town Board regarding their Resolution No. 27, forwarded to him by letter dated June 13 1997.

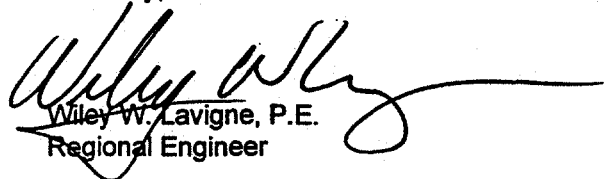
The Department wishes to thank the Board for its continued concern, input and involvement in reaching final resolution on this long standing and damaging contamination of one of the State's most treasured resources, the Hudson River.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is charged with the decision to dredge or not to dredge, albeit with our concurrence. At this time no decision has been made by EPA and it will be about two years before a decision is issued. The public is, and will continue to be, incorporated in EPA's decision making process so as to achieve a balanced solution by taking into account their perspectives, knowledge, and values. A decision by EPA will be preceded by the release of a preferred remedy (i.e., proposed decision) followed by a formal period of public comment. The intent of public participation is to accommodate the legitimate interests of individuals and groups that are truly representative of the effected community.

The decisions EPA must eventually make for the Hudson River may be among, if not, their most complex for any site across the United States. Thereby the input of the Board will help them to craft the best possible solution.

Again, I wish to thank the Board for its concern, input and involvement in finding the best solution for addressing the PCB contamination in the Hudson River.

Sincerely,

  
Wiley W. Lavigne, P.E.  
Regional Engineer

WWL:DLS:krs

10.5460



bc: D. Tomchuk, USEPA  
S. Buchanan  
M. O'Toole  
W. Demick  
D. Steenberge