



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

70112

SEP 5 1997

Bruce A. Ferguson, Chairman
Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board
Washington County Board of Supervisors
383 Broadway
Fort Edward, New York 12828

Dear Mr. Ferguson:

This is in response to your letters of July 23, 1997 to EPA Administrator Carol Browner and EPA Region 2 Administrator Jeanne M. Fox, regarding the Hudson River PCBs site. Your letters express opposition to any remediation measures for the site that involve the dredging of PCB-contaminated sediments from the Hudson River and the disposal of those sediments in a landfill. You also express concern for potential negative environmental, economic and social consequences for Washington County and its communities.

EPA is aware of the concerns of the Upper Hudson River community associated with the 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 order to ensure that the public has access to the information developed for the Reassessment and the opportunity to raise concerns to the Agency, EPA has established an extensive Community Interaction Program for the Reassessment. One of the most active of the groups formed has been the Agricultural Liaison Group. If you are interested in more information on the Community Interaction Program, or in joining the Agricultural Liaison Group, please contact Ann Rychlenski, the community relations coordinator, at (212) 637-3672.

Sincerely yours,

John S. Fusco

for Richard L. Caspe, Director
Emergency and Remedial Response Division

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

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGRICULTURAL & FARMLAND
PROTECTION BOARD

383 BROADWAY
FORT EDWARD, NY 12828



BRUCE A. FERGUSON
CHAIRMAN

July 23, 1997

Honorable Carol Browner, Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
401 M Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Ms. Browner:

On behalf of the Washington County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, I urge you to prevent a PCB dredging and landfill project on the Upper Hudson River.

Agriculture is the largest industry in Washington County, and the county's farm economy is one of the most important in the State. Such a project would affect the agricultural industry, which depends on consumer confidence in the purity of its products. This confidence would likely be undermined by the presence of a hazardous waste landfill. In addition, tourism development efforts, especially redevelopment of the county's scenic and historic river front would be marred by a decade-long dredging project as would our pastoral quality of life, which is one of our greatest assets here in Washington County.

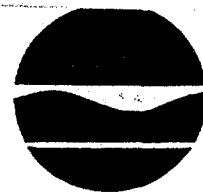
It appears there is no demonstrated environmental benefit to a dredge-and-landfill project on the Hudson River and many unmitigated long-term negative environmental, economic and social consequences for Washington County and its communities. The Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board feels this project would be a gross, unwarranted and unnecessary insult to the area and to the agricultural industry and we implore you to prevent PCB dredging.

Sincerely,


Bruce A. Ferguson, Chairman
Agricultural & Farmland Protection Board

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

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



John P. Cahill
Commissioner

(518) 897-1241

(518) 897-1245 (Fax)

August 4, 1997

Mr. Bruce A. Ferguson, Chairman
Washington County Agricultural & Farmland
Protection Board
383 Broadway
Fort Edward, NY 12828

Dear Chairman Ferguson:

Commissioner Cahill asked me to respond to the Board regarding your recent letter concerning the PCB dredging and landfill project on the Upper Hudson River.

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

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Mr. Bruce A. Ferguson, Chairman

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August 4, 1997

bc: D. Tomchuk, USEPA
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