

NOTICES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-6159-6]

**Peer Review Meeting on the Hudson River PCBs Reassessment RI/FS Phase 2 Report  
Entitled "Preliminary Model Calibration Report (PMCR)"**

Friday, September 11, 1998

**\*48728 AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**ACTION:** Notice of a Scientific **Peer Review** meeting to review EPA's Preliminary Model Calibration Report (PMCR).

**SUMMARY:** Eastern Research Group, Inc. (ERG), a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) contractor, has scheduled a scientific **peer review** meeting to review the "Preliminary Model Calibration Report (PMCR)." This report is one of several reports that comprise the basis for EPA's reassessment of the PCB- contaminated sections of the upper Hudson River. This report includes data and information used to make projections of future concentrations of PCBs in water, sediment, and fish tissue as well as the rationale for selection of calibration data sets and projections for the Thompson Island Pool.

**DATES:** The scientific **peer review** meeting will be held on September 9 and 10, 1998, from 9:00 a.m. to approximately 5:00 p.m. each day. The public is invited to attend the scientific **peer review** meeting. There is no charge for attending the meeting; however, seating is limited so advance registration is suggested.

**ADDRESSES:** The scientific **peer review** meeting will be held at the Sheraton Saratoga Springs Hotel and Conference Center, 534 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY, 12866. To make hotel reservations, please call the hotel directly at (518) 584-4000. Reference the "PCBs **Peer Review** Meeting" to receive the group rate. The Sheraton Saratoga Springs Hotel and Conference Center is located off Exit 15 of I-87 (Adirondack Northway). If traveling North on I-87, turn left off Exit 15. At the fifth traffic light, turn left onto Rock Street. At the stop sign, turn right onto Maple Avenue. The Sheraton parking lot is on the right. If traveling South on I-87, turn right off Exit 15. At the fourth traffic light, turn left onto Rock Street. At the stop sign turn right onto Maple Avenue. The Sheraton parking lot is on the right. Members of the public wishing to attend the meeting may contact EPA's contractor, Eastern Research Group, Inc. (ERG), by calling the ERG meeting registration line at (781) 674- 7374.

The document to be peer reviewed, entitled "Preliminary Model Calibration Report (PMCR)," may be obtained by contacting Damien Hughes, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region II, Emergency and Remedial Response Division, 290 Broadway, 20th Floor, New York, NY, 10007-1866; telephone (212) 637-3957; fax (212) 637-4284. When ordering, please provide your name, mailing address, and the document title.

The PMCR also will be available for public inspection at the EPA Region II Library, 290 Broadway, 16th Floor, New York, NY, 10007-1866, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for federal holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has contracted with Eastern \*48729 Research Group, Inc. (ERG) to manage and conduct the peer review. To attend the meeting contact ERG's registration line at (781) 674-7374, and reference the "PCBs Peer Review Meeting." A limited amount of time will be set aside for members of the public to present brief oral comments regarding the Preliminary Model Calibration Report (PMCR) to the peer review panel or for public record on each day of the meeting. Oral presentations will be limited to a maximum of 5 minutes, and the number of people giving oral comment may be limited by the time available. Opportunity for making oral comment will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis; therefore, the public is encouraged to register in advance to present oral comments by contacting ERG's registration line at (781) 674-7374.

For general questions about the overall Hudson River PCBs Reassessment, contact Ann Rychlenski, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region II, Communications Division, 290 Broadway, New York, NY, 10007-1866, (212) 637-3672.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: From about 1947 to 1977, approximately 1.1 million pounds of PCBs were discharged into the Hudson River from two General Electric (GE) Company capacitor manufacturing plants located in Fort Edward and Hudson Falls, New York. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has classified PCBs as probable human carcinogens. In 1983, 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 1984, EPA made an interim no-action decision for the contaminated upper Hudson River sediments.

In 1990, EPA began the reassessment of its no-action decision of PCB-contaminated sediments in the upper Hudson River. Because of the size and complexity of the site and the high degree of public interest associated with this project, EPA decided to conduct the reassessment in three phases, issuing reports to the public as 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. The reports consist

of the following:

Phase 1 Report--This report compiled and analyzed existing data relevant to PCB contamination in the **Hudson River**. The report also included a preliminary ecological risk assessment and a preliminary human health risk assessment. The Phase 1 Report was released in August 1991.

Phase 2 Report--The Phase 2 Report consists of seven separately issued reports:

- Database Report--The report is a guide to understanding the information contained in the database and where to find it. The database includes EPA's Phase 2 data from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), General Electric (GE), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and other sources. EPA's database is available to the public on CD-ROM. An explanation of the database is contained in the Database Report, but the report did not include any analyses or findings. The report was released in November 1995; the CD-ROM was released in March 1996. An update to the database is expected in July 1998.

- Preliminary Model Calibration Report--This report includes groundwork for projections of future concentrations of PCBs in water, sediment, and fish tissue; rationale for selection of calibration data sets; and projections for the Thompson Island Pool. The report provides interested parties with an opportunity to review and comment on the assumptions used in the models developed for the reassessment. The report was released in October 1996.

Data Evaluation and Interpretation Report--This report contains geochemical analysis of data from water columns and high-resolution sediment coring investigations; evaluation of these data to determine relationships between parameters; and evaluation of PCB sources. This report, which complements the computer modeling, was released in February 1997.

- Low Resolution Coring Report--This report contains information that describes the technical approach for the Low Resolution Coring Program, field sampling procedures, and sample analysis. The report also interprets the results of the program, presents evidence on how the low-resolution coring results build on previously collected Phase 2 data, and examines PCB inventories in the area of study.

- Baseline Modeling Report--This report 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 risk assessments.

- Ecological Risk Assessment--This report will include the evaluation and interpretation of the ecological field data, further the Phase I ecological risk assessment, and present the ecological risk to certain organisms associated with the site.

- Human Health Risk Assessment--This report will present the human health risks associated with the site. It includes cancer and non-cancer risks from consumption

o. fish and other exposure pathways from the upper **Hudson River**, will include the most current PCB toxicity values adopted by EPA in the risk calculation, and will qualitatively address endocrine disruption effects.

Phase 3 Report--The Phase 3 Report will consist of the Feasibility Study, a detailed analysis of remedial alternatives, the running of models for each remedial scenario, and a calculation of risk reduction for each scenario.

The above reassessment reports taken together, along with the public comment received on them, will assist EPA in formulating a Proposed Plan for the Site, in which the Agency will propose its preferred remedy for the Site.

Only the Preliminary Model Calibration Report (PMCR) and related supplemental documents will be the subject of the scientific **peer review** meeting to be held on September 9 and 10, 1998; the Phase 1 Report, the other Phase 2 Reports, and the Phase 3 Report will not be addressed.

Dated: September 1, 1998.

William J. Muszynski,

Deputy Regional Administrator, Region 2.

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