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Hudson River PBCs Public Meeting

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1 bottom will stay stable. We use  
2 environmental dredging techniques. After we  
3 get done with this, the way we expect it is  
4 that August we would finalize a decision. If  
5 the decision is to move forward, we then  
6 would take three years to design to get the  
7 access, to set all the details of this plan  
8 in motion, and then it would be five years to  
9 actually construct it.

10 What I didn't mention is part of  
11 the dredging also is aimed at down river  
12 impacts as well. We estimate that roughly  
13 500 pounds of PCBs flow over the Troy dam  
14 every day, and our estimate is that by doing  
15 this dredging we can take 40 percent of that  
16 load. So 200-pound reduction in the flow  
17 over the dam; we cannot get it down really  
18 much more below that. But we think that  
19 within reason we can certainly remove 200  
20 pounds a year of PCBs that flow over that  
21 dam. I may have said per day earlier, it is  
22 500 pounds a year and 200 pounds a year that  
23 we would be able to eliminate.

24 Again, the comment period closes on  
25

1 greatest extent possible, since this type of  
2 suction removal appears to be the most  
3 efficient and effective technology available.

4 GE's multimillion dollars public  
5 relations lobbying and litigation campaign is  
6 a flagrant attempt to mislead the public as  
7 to the status of recovery of the Hudson River  
8 ecosystem and the impacts that dredging would  
9 have on local communities. Moreover, GE's  
10 campaign is morally reprehensible in that it  
11 seeks to avoid taking responsibility for the  
12 cleanup of an ecosystem that it has single-  
13 handedly crippled.

14 GE reports a thriving catch and  
15 release system as evidence that the river and  
16 surrounding communities are prospering.  
17 However, current fish advisories recommend  
18 that women of child bearing age and children  
19 under 15 should not eat any fish from any  
20 part of the Hudson River south of the Hudson  
21 Falls.

22 The Hudson River has undergone a  
23 remarkable transformation over the past 30  
24 years thanks to the efforts of the  
25

1 in an environment they do not need to fear.  
2 A healthy Earth communicates on the deepest  
3 levels a message of security and trust in the  
4 future. The heart, our collective spirit,  
5 longs for justice. President Bush and Mrs.  
6 Whitman, you should know, it damages our  
7 collective sense of morality when the most  
8 powerful, one of the world's most wealthy  
9 entities can shirk its responsibility. Don't  
10 we teach our children to respect the property  
11 of others and to clean up after themselves?

12       Tonight as I was leaving the house  
13 my five-year-old son asked me where I was  
14 going. And then he asked me what does EPA  
15 stand for, Environmental Protection Agency.  
16 He then said, I quote, "By the name of that  
17 organization I can tell what the answer is  
18 going to be: General Electric, clean up the  
19 Hudson." Thank you very much.

20       MR. CASPE: John Dyba.

21       MR. JOHN DYBA: My name is John  
22 Dyba. I live in Pearl River, New York.

23       I was at an environmental  
24 management council meeting on January the  
25

1 non-cancer effects.

2 Marian Olsen is our risk  
3 assessment, human health expert.

4 MS. MARIAN OLSEN: I'd just like to  
5 address some of the issues that you raised.  
6 The National Toxicology Program is the  
7 nation's group that's responsible for  
8 evaluating animal studies and determining  
9 classifications of carcinogenicity, and they  
10 evaluated the data back in the 1980s and came  
11 to the conclusion that PCBs are probable  
12 human carcinogens. In 1996 EPA evaluated  
13 human epidemiological studies, and these  
14 were conducted in workers who had worked  
15 in plants and were exposed to PCBs as part of  
16 their jobs. These studies were conducted  
17 around the world. And what EPA concluded  
18 at that time is that this evidence is suggestive  
19 of PCBs causing cancer in humans.

20 In addition, EPA evaluated a number of  
21 animal studies, and there is a consistency in  
22 those studies. We have found that PCBs are  
23 causing cancer in the animals. Animals have  
24 been shown to be an excellent indication  
25

1 in eradicating PCBs from our fisheries  
2 forever. We don't want to see continued PCB  
3 contamination coming down from these hot  
4 spots for generations. We would like them to  
5 clean this up now, once and for all.

6 GE claims the river is cleaning  
7 itself of PCBs, although our studies have  
8 shown PCBs are not being universally buried  
9 and often remain in the top nine inches of the  
10 sediment. Less than ten percent is  
11 dechlorinated over the past 20 years. These  
12 less chlorinated PCBs are still toxic and more  
13 mobile. The estimated \$460 billion  
14 remediation will greatly enhance the level in  
15 economy. This amount of money is a very  
16 small price to pay for the restoration of our  
17 river. The State of New York is now  
18 considering spending more than \$4 billion on  
19 a new Tappan Zee bridge project that is  
20 unnecessary. Why can't we ask this  
21 corporation who has destroyed our river to  
22 invest a small fraction of that amount to  
23 return it to health. And why can't we ask GE  
24 to bring this river back to life. Thank you.

25

1 of residual PCB either adsorbed or absorbed onto  
2 silt soil particles remaining after the dredging of the  
3 hot spots is completed?

4 MR. CASPE: I'm not sure I  
5 understand the second question. First question we  
6 got. Second question?

7 MR. WANAMAKER: Second  
8 question: Is part of the remedial strategy, enhanced  
9 bioremediation, not natural attenuation, of residual  
10 PCB either adsorbed or absorbed onto soil silt  
11 particles remaining after the hot spots is  
12 completed?

13 MR. TOMCHUK: We've done some  
14 modeling to determine the amount of PCBs that  
15 would be transported downstream as far as  
16 from the resuspension from a dredging  
17 operation. That model really is a sediment-  
18 based model, so it is really modeling the  
19 particular transport. So we do have to look  
20 into the dissolve phase to transport a little  
21 bit more. We do believe though that because  
22 the particulate drops out of the water fairly  
23 quickly as it moves downstream, there will  
24 not be a long opportunity for the PCBs to

25

1 garbage or something when you throw it into  
2 the river. It kills the fish. It kills the  
3 fish of their habitat. Now we want to clean this  
4 river of fish killing. There is no ever, ever  
5 throwing garbage in this river,  
6 because these fish are part of a habitat of what  
7 we eat, and we need them to live. And the  
8 fishermen, when they catch the fish from the  
9 river, when they catch them it makes them dead  
10 when we eat them, but we want them to have  
11 their own habitat to live. We're people and  
12 they are living too. Not any of us are important  
13 too, just fish, animals, animals are important  
14 because they need food to live. It's part of a  
15 habitat.

16 MS. MELISSA ROSEN: In Nyack they  
17 call me Kati's mother. I'm Melissa Rosen,  
18 and I have a brief e-mail that I sent the EPA  
19 earlier to read: I cannot stress  
20 emphatically enough my desire to rehabilitate  
21 the Hudson River of its PCB problem. I've  
22 read the literature on the EPA website, and  
23 aside of some minor questions about the  
24 dredging of the PCBs, and hopefully they

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1 not just the fish. Not long ago I got a call from  
2 the president of the Chamber of Commerce of  
3 Fort Edward, New York, who said to me, Mr.  
4 Higby, I know you're an environmentalist, but I  
5 need to talk to you about part of this  
6 issue you may not be familiar with. I said  
7 what's that. She said it is the economy, we  
8 are being held hostage here by this  
9 contamination. She said I wish that we could  
10 put outside Fort Edwards a sign that said  
11 welcome to Fort Edward, an historic town with  
12 a beautiful river running through it. But to  
13 be honest, we have to put a sign that says  
14 welcome to Fort Edward, an historic town with  
15 a toxic Superfund running through it. And so  
16 of all the reprehensible things that the  
17 polluter in this case has done -- and  
18 certainly they have been reprehensible --  
19 they soiled and polluted one of the world's  
20 great rivers. And then after it was  
21 disclosed and after that pollution was made  
22 illegal, they used lawyers and every trick in  
23 the book to stall that cleanup, and they have  
24 been very effective in stalling that cleanup  
25

1 and PCBs. And how about the savings and loan  
2 deregulation. That was done. The government  
3 did it. They can't blame the savings and  
4 loan. They weren't supposed to listen to the  
5 lobbyists. It is the government supposed to  
6 be in charge. If they let somebody else in  
7 charge, it is their responsibility. But of  
8 course, it is the people's responsibility too  
9 to let the government know. People usually  
10 do, and the government doesn't want to  
11 listen.

12 We have what I call in the United  
13 States the second largest white elephant called  
14 Pyramid in Rockland County. We were led to  
15 believe by the government people who are  
16 supposed to know about the environment tell  
17 us oh, it won't cause any problem with the  
18 environment, in fact, it is magic. It not  
19 only won't pollute, it will suck up pollution  
20 that's there. I don't believe this type of  
21 stuff, and part of it is promulgated by the  
22 government. I guess that's about bad enough for  
23 now. Thank you.

24 MR. CASPE: The next speaker is  
25

1 the program that really is beyond what EPA  
2 normally does. There are damages that I  
3 think you get tied into that or that go  
4 beyond. All we look to do is remediate the  
5 site. As far as damages that are caused by  
6 others, there are other people that have authority  
7 is kind of aside to, and those are the  
8 resource trustees, which in this case include  
9 NOAA, Department of Interior and New York  
10 State. And certainly the State Attorney  
11 General has been fairly outspoken on that.

12 Well, are there any other speakers?  
13 Nobody else has filled out any other cards. I  
14 would like to thank you all for coming and  
15 I would like to thank the Congressman and  
16 Mayor for having us, and thank you for  
17 arranging the facility. Thank you for your  
18 energy and your time and thank you for  
19 showing up. With that, I'm sure you'll be  
20 hearing from us and we'll be hearing from you  
21 thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 CONGRESSMAN GILMAN: Thank you  
24 very much, Mr. Caspe.

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