

70407

DATE: 3-7-01
HUDSON RIVER PBCs PUBLIC MEETING

10.8409

1 March 7, 2001

2 Falls, from the source, and we're coming up
3 with about a pound to a pound and-a-half a
4 day of PCBs from the sediments, from the
5 Thompson Island Pool, so there's a big
6 difference there. Three ounces versus a
7 pound to a pound and-a-half. We think it's
8 very important that the source be
9 controlled and that they get rid of it. We
10 fully support it. Obviously, New York
11 State does, also, but it's not the only
12 answer.

13 So what does that leave us
14 with?

15 What we have proposed for a
16 remedy and it's probably -- and I'm sure
17 it's a little bit hard to see here, there's
18 also some graph outside that shows it in a
19 little larger form, I believe, but in any
20 event, the remedy selected is up here, this
21 Rem 3/10 select. What it amounts to is
22 about 1.5 -- is the dredging of about 2.65
23 million cubic yards in the upper 40 miles
24 of the river.

1 March 7, 2001

2 SPEAKER: I represent the
3 Borough of Fort Lee and Mayor Jack Alter
4 and all Council people, but Mayor Jack
5 Alter also is a Bergen County Freeholder
6 and Loretta Weinberg is also represented in
7 our resolution. She is working on a
8 corresponding resolution for the cleanup in
9 the state legislature. Our resolution was
10 passed unanimously January 25th and we have
11 public comment on it.

12 Fort Lee is a river town
13 despite what many people think. They look
14 at high-rises. Point in fact, many of us
15 came from working class backgrounds
16 including myself. Well, the fact is that
17 the river needs to be cleaned.

18 (Brief interruption.)

19 SPEAKER: I don't have a
20 fleet of attorneys from GE, so I'm here on
21 my own, so...

22 The fact is we grew up along
23 the river. We swam in the river, believe
24 it or not, right under the George
25 Washington Bridge. We fished and crabbed

1. March 7, 2001

2 we catch, that our people catch and where
3 we swim and I support the EPA in their
4 conclusion.

5 GE made a lot of money over
6 the years, I've sailed the Hudson and it's
7 a pretty deserted place until you get up
8 around the Albany area and they're still
9 thriving and I think it's time for GE to
10 put some money back into what they took out
11 of the river.

12 Thank you very much.

13 SPEAKER: My name is Jim
14 Guine. First I'd like to thank the EPA for
15 holding public comment.

16 I've worked doing limnol (phonetic)
17 research for the Smithsonian and also the
18 Field Institute and done some limnology
19 work and somebody who's lived through a
20 cancer scare and don't particularly like
21 carcinogens and hope nobody else has to
22 live through a cancer scare.

23 I'd like to do something
24 unpopular and thank GE because, you know,
25 although it seems clear to me that they

1 March 7, 2001

2 seeing a cleaner Lower Hudson as well.

3 MR. MC CABE: Thanks, Doug.

4 And, Sharon, before you get up, let me just
5 mention -- please get up, I'm sorry.

6 Before you speak, let me just say the next
7 five.

8 Marilyn Pulver, Craig
9 Michaels, Wayne Tomasi, Glenn Blank it
10 looks like, Tony Evangelista.

11 SPEAKER: Thank you very
12 much.

13 Good evening. My name is
14 Sharon Rugey. I am a resident and
15 Department Supervisor in the Town of Fort
16 Edward.

17 I have spent the better part
18 of the last twenty years fighting for a
19 cleaner Hudson, but without dredging. For
20 the last ten years, I've been a member of
21 the EPA's Environmental Liaison Committee.

22 This evening I do have one
23 question first, and that is, upon reading
24 the feasibility study, I'm trying to

1 March 7, 2001

2 source material would be gone, so you
3 wouldn't have that constant load of 500
4 pounds a year.

5 MR. MC CABE: And as Doug
6 said, Sharon, if you have some information,
7 I'm not familiar with the information
8 you're sharing with us, but we'd like to
9 see it, obviously, and be able to comment
10 on it.

11 SPEAKER: Yeah, I didn't
12 bring it with me, but it is available and
13 I'll make sure that you get it, but I have
14 -- because of this crowd being very
15 concerned about the fish, I think that we
16 have to look very seriously at the
17 resuspension and to know if we're actually
18 going to make the problem worse with the
19 proposed dredge.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. MC CABE: Thanks, Sharon.

22 I think as Doug mentioned,
23 any -- we obviously have not calculated
24 numbers as Sharon has cited and we
25 certainly expect any of those numbers to be

1 March 7, 2001

2 far less than what is currently being
3 contributed to the river by the sediments,
4 but, in any event, whatever happens during
5 dredging, which we will minimize as much as
6 possible, will be a one-time deal and will
7 be dissipated quickly over time as opposed
8 to leaving it there forever, so...

9 Marilyn.

10 SPEAKER: Hi, I'm the Fort
11 Edward Town Supervisor. I became involved
12 in this dredging proposal back in the late
13 seventies, early eighties. Site 10 was
14 adjacent to my dairy farm, basically going
15 to put the farming community out of
16 business. That's why I stood up and became
17 involved. We won at all levels of the
18 State Court system and in 1984 EPA's
19 decision was a record of leaving the river
20 alone because it would be devastating to
21 the ecological system of the river.

22 Today I'm here as a
23 supervisor of a community that will be most
24 dramatically impacted by the proposed EPA
25 plan. I am here tonight as that supervisor

1 March 7, 2001

2 Decision. That's a technical document that
3 has nothing to do with General Electric,
4 you know, that's right or the way we're
5 going to come out with it and, hopefully,
6 that will be in August. After that is when
7 we start worrying about General Electric or
8 anyone else.

9 And then we will attempt to
10 have General Electric or any responsible
11 party, which is basically General Electric,
12 implement the remedy, do the design and do
13 the construction. We have legal means to
14 go after them, but that's for another day,
15 obviously.

16 For now what we're really
17 concerned about is do we have the right
18 remedy and let's go forward with the
19 remedy, worry about that part of it a
20 little bit later.

21 SPEAKER: My name is Wayne
22 Tomasi. I'm President of New York State
23 Bass Federation. I live in the
24 Poughkeepsie area on the Hudson River.

25 To protect our national

1 March 7, 2001

2 habitat for our large mouth and small mouth
3 bass and 17 miles of shore line which is a
4 primary spawning for small mouth bass.

5 We believe that the dredging
6 will cause the silt in the river by a clam
7 shell technology will actually, you know,
8 provide further silt in the system and
9 affect our bass.

10 With PCBs levels declining in
11 the river, we're very happy that the New
12 York State DEC opened up the Upper Hudson
13 seven years ago, not one year ago, to
14 fishing again. It is a catch and release
15 season as of 1994 --

16 MR. MC CABE: 1995.

17 SPEAKER: Not one year, so we
18 would like that to be corrected on that.
19 Many of our anglers now do enjoy the
20 recreational fishing in that river since
21 that was reopened.

22 Although since bass fishing
23 is our primary focus, we also support the
24 communities in the area. We worry about
25 their concerns of use of highways, et

1 March 7, 2001

2 but to feed their own families. Many of
3 these people don't quite understand the
4 dangers of being exposed to eating fish
5 two, three or four times a week, which many
6 of them do do.

7 Our organization has been
8 trying to inform them about these dangers,
9 but it would be very nice when somebody
10 comes to one of our meetings to say, yeah,
11 it's okay to eat the fish at least once or
12 twice a week and, therefore, I think
13 something has to be done and done rather
14 quickly.

15 Thank you so much.

16 MR. MC CABE: The next five
17 are Paul Mastromarino, James Campbell, Jeff
18 Tittel, Jim Campbell, I don't know if
19 that's different, and Manna Jo Greene.

20 SPEAKER: You're not going to
21 like me. My name's Paul Mastromarina, I
22 live here in New Jersey. I'm a concerned
23 GE shareholder and I'm sure many of you
24 have GE in your mutual fund or IRA.

25 SPEAKER: No way.

March 7, 2001

profession. I've been doing it for twenty years since Superfund started. I worked on about thirty-five Superfund sites. I'm currently working on the RIFS study for what was once the largest transforming plant in the world and my meeting on the proposed plan for that study was yesterday, in another EPA region.

The other reason, and that's why I have a strong professional interest, what's happening at the Hudson River has affected remedy selection at sites involving contaminated sediment all over the United States, including a site off the coast of California, a site I've been working on, also, so I have a strong interest in what's going on up there.

The second interest I have is that I live three miles from a landfill that takes a lot of waste from New York and New Jersey and western Pennsylvania, 355 miles from here. Honestly, the remedy selection process that has been gone through for this particular Superfund site

1 March 7, 2001

2 now. Right now is a technical decision;
3 we'll worry about who pays for it later.
4 I'm very interested in having General
5 Electric pay for it, that's the law.

6 The law says we will go after
7 General Electric. We have a variety of
8 legal mechanisms to do that. If that
9 doesn't work, then we would have to fund it
10 using the Superfund and then try to recover
11 the costs from General Electric, so we have
12 every intention of either having them do it
13 and then pay for it, whatever the remedy
14 might be.

15 Were there any other
16 questions?

17 SPEAKER: Charles Stam.
18 Hudson River Fishermen's Association.

19 We've heard several people
20 testify how much General Electric is
21 spending recently on their advertising. We
22 think they're going to spend equal amount
23 of money to see this project fail. It
24 would be in their best interest if they
25 take an active role in this cleanup to see

1 March 7, 2001

2 able or they are able to completely shut
3 that off, these numbers will be even
4 better, there will be a larger spread
5 between them. And, obviously, that's what
6 we're hoping.

7 SPEAKER: I'm sorry, Gil
8 Hawkins, Hudson River Fishermen's
9 Association. Just have a quick question.

10 Are you aware of the fact
11 that the New York State DEC is thinking
12 about opening up the commercial and striped
13 bass fishery in the Hudson River and
14 allowing those fish to be caught in the
15 shadnets and be sold at the Fulton Fish
16 Market?

17 MR. MC CABE: We're aware of
18 those discussions, yes. Yes, sir.

19 SPEAKER: Ron Shinella, Glen
20 Rock, New Jersey.

21 It seems to me the numbers
22 you're presenting here, if I heard you
23 right, you said you're going to remove
24 100,000 out of the 200,000. If you just
25 forget fish for the moment, it sounds to me

1 March 7, 2001

2 like you're going to reduce the
3 concentration down river here by 50 percent
4 by a factor of two. I feel that's either
5 not worth doing or we should do more.

6 In fact, I think in your
7 report you mentioned a possible amount much
8 higher than that, higher than 1.3 million.
9 If you take 100,000 out of 1.3 million,
10 you're going to do very little to the
11 concentration down here, so I think you
12 should address whether you are doing enough
13 or forget it.

14 MR. MC CABE: The 1.3 million
15 was an estimate of the so-called discharges
16 from General Electric.

17 Again, I mentioned that there
18 was a lot of other things -- number one,
19 that's an estimate.

20 Number two, there are a lot
21 of seeps, leaks, et cetera, that weren't
22 discharges. We have no idea how much that
23 was that got into the river.

24 However, that is not what
25 remains in the river based upon the