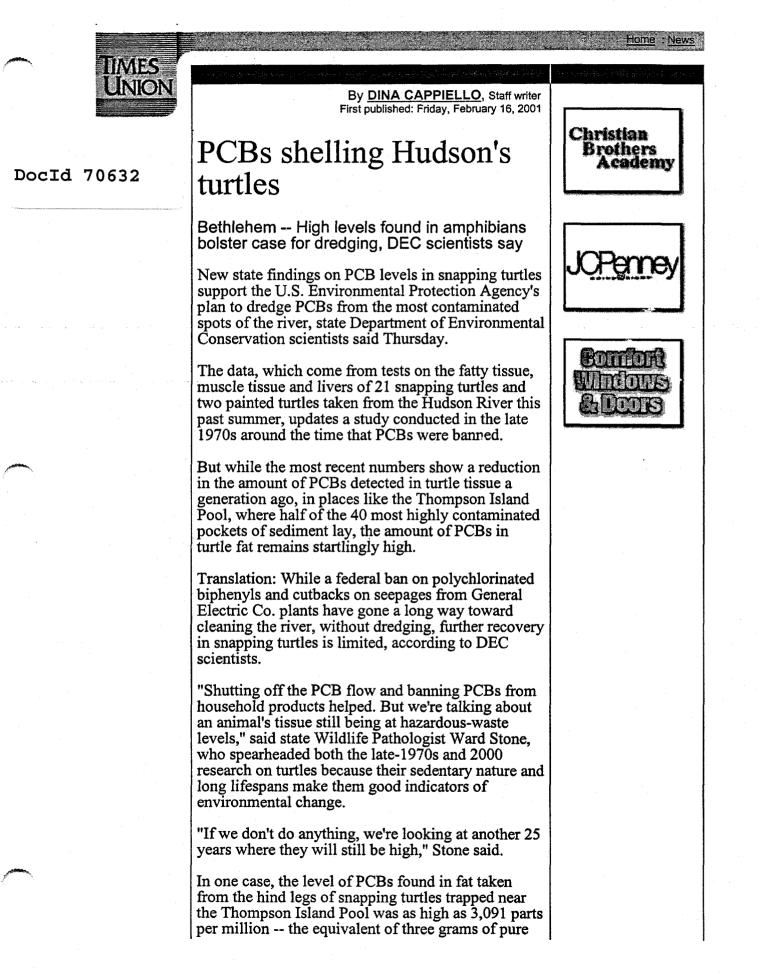
'PCBs shelling Hudson's turtles' - timesunion.com

http://www.timesunion.com/AspStories/story.asp?storyKey=52042&category=C



polychlorinated biphenyls in two pounds of tissue, said Stone.

"You would have a visible puddle of PCBs in your hand," he said.

These kind of levels, according to Al Breisch, the DEC's amphibian and reptile specialist, are impossible to achieve from just the three ounces per day that seep out of GE's Hudson Falls plant, which the company claims. The turtles must be getting the toxic chemical from diets and lives intimately connected to the river's sediments.

"I can't believe it's caused by the little bit coming from sources," Breisch said.

But GE -- which could pay for the \$460 million dredging project -- contends that while turtles do get PCBs from the environment, it's nearly impossible to tell what is coming from where.

"It's hard for a biologist to say that the three ounces per day can't translate into the amounts seen in the turtle," said Adam Ayers, GE's Hudson River ecologist.

The company also said it was nearly impossible to prefer a remedy based on the turtle data, and little to no evidence exists suggesting PCBs affect turtle populations.

But what concerns Stone and Breisch is the people along the river who are trapping and eating snapping turtles, unaware of the high levels of contaminants.

While no federal action limit exists for turtles, the state recommends that women of child-bearing age and children under 15 eat none from the river. For the rest of the population, the state Health Department recommends trimming away all fat and discarding the liver and eggs.

"We know of several commercial collectors that are hauling a bunch of them out," said Breisch. "With the contaminant levels as they are, that's probably not a good idea."

Send this story to a friend

Return to <u>Top</u>

<u>Copyright</u> 2001, Capital Newspapers Division of The Hearst Corporation, Albany, N.Y. The information you receive online from Times Union is protected by the copyright laws of the United States. The copyright laws prohibit any copying, redistributing, retransmitting, or repurposing of any copyright-protected material.

10.10647

3/28/01 12:23 PM

2 of 2