

Memo To: John Szeligowski

Memo From: John Robinson

Date: May 25, 2001

RE: Discussion with Canal Corp.

On Friday, May 25, 2001, John Szeligowski (JS) and John Robinson (JR) discussed Champlain Canal issues with John Dergosits (JD) of the NYS Canal Corporation. John is a former NYSDEC employee familiar with the issues surrounding the Hudson River PCB project.

We asked JD several questions regarding typical canal operations and traffic. First off, John Szeligowski discussed the Adirondack Chamber of Commerce FS comments that quoted the Canal Corporation's policy on Canal navigability. JD replied that the Adirondack quote represented Canal Corporation policy. John asked for a copy of the Adirondack comments (Doug Tomchuk requested that JD call him in this regard).

The accumulated sediments near Hot Spot 34 and Lock 5 were discussed and JS indicated that the proposed PCB dredging project would require navigational dredging in that area as a first step. JD agreed and provided additional insight into safety hazards in that area. Apparently, barge operators moving upstream need to swing wide of the dam and fight spillway currents to avoid the accumulated sediments. Recreation boaters traveling downstream face dangers of fighting downstream currents moving toward the spillway. JD provided us with names of commercial operators to ask about the Lock 5 situation. They are:

Luther Blount (in Connecticut)	American Caribbean Cruise Line	(Niagara Prince)
Art Blake	Empire Marine	

JD mentioned that the Ft. Edward terminal wall had only four feet of water at this time and was therefore essentially unusable for mooring purposes. The Ft. Edward C of C is very interested in improving draft at this location and would support environmental dredging.

We asked JD some specific lock questions. He indicated that up to 20 recreation vessels have locked at once. However, in the case of some specialty barges (300x40), only the barge alone can be locked. These barges would be pulled through with a winch and the tug boat would pass through in a separate lock event. The typical situation, however, is for a tug and average barge to move as a unit through a lock.

Commercial traffic as presented in Table 4-1 of the Recreation Way Plan, and expressed in tons, refers to commodity shipments. The average barge load was about 1500 tons. Almost all of the cargo was petroleum product, including Jet Fuel to Pease AFB, gasoline, fuel oil and diesel. Since Pease AFB closed in 1994, commercial traffic has dwindled to zero. The table below presents a summary of commercial traffic on the Champlain Canal

Year	Jet Fuel (tons)	Gasoline (tons)	Total Petro. (tons)
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1989	108,070	99,155	224,346
1990	104,372	46,433	175,336
1991	99,425	6,662	109,570
1992	78,184	0	78,184
1993	57,178	0	57,178
1994	3,365	0	3,365

An application proposal submitted by Jointa-Galusha to open a quarry includes provisions for moving aggregate via barge, but this is the only non-petroleum commodity that will possibly be transported along the canal that JD is aware of.

We asked John about other navigation issues as follows:

JR asked if there is a problem when barges pass in the land cut, in particular?

JD indicated that the standard barge was 40 feet wide (bottom), the locks are 43 feet wide, and the land cuts are 75 feet wide. When two barges pass within the land cut, it is necessary to take advantage of the side slopes of the cut walls (1/2). The lighter the barges the greater the passing clearance.

JR asked if there is a problem when barges pass at night?

JD indicated that barges have some standard running lights, and referred us to the US Coast Guard regulations entitled "Pilot Rules for Inland Waters" for the standard regulations. Special arrangements can be made for nighttime operation of the locks at contractor cost.

Is there a problem with barges breaking their moorings?

Again, JD referred us to the Coast Guard manual for standard mooring practices.

JS asked about lock cycle stats for the Champlain Canal for 1999, and JD is going to send additional information. JD requested a written request to remind him.

Lastly, we asked if the proposed increased barge traffic would interfere with recreational boaters, and JD indicated that was a good question that remains to be seen.