



An Important Key to Better Farm Living

WASHINGTON COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Greenwich, New York 12834

February 6, 1993

Larry Eckhardt
Rensselaer Co. Farm Bureau

Dear Larry,

I know you don't already have enough to do, but I would like to ask you to write a letter on your county board's behalf on a subject near and dear to us in Washington County (no, ...not trash burning plants). Roger Moseley has been active with me in the USEPA's reassessment of the PCB contamination of the Hudson River. This process drags on but now the EPA has a new boss, Carol Browner. At her Confirmation Hearing in January, our own Senator Moynihan had these comments for her:

"Even before Senator Warner got to the Senate, I got money to dredge some PCBs that were dumped by the General Electric Corporation at Fort Edward in the Hudson.....That was 1978, the PCBs. They are still there, dredging, pluming, as they say, toward Poughkeepsie. And it's a question of what comes first and second and third, and may we hope that we can engage you in this enterprise."

To which Ms. Browner replied: "Absolutely. I look forward to it."

The exchange was small but disturbing. I have enclosed a copy of my letter to Administrator Browner. My intent was to demonstrate that not all New Yorkers may feel as Senator Moynihan. Could you join my effort by also sending Ms. Browner a letter stating your county's position on this issue. I have also approached Paul McDowell to do so on New York Farm Bureau's behalf and Betty Koval on Saratoga County's behalf.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Tom Borden

Tom Borden
Ph: 753-4341



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WASHINGTON COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Greenwich, New York 1283

February 2, 1993

Hon. Carol Browner
USEPA Administrator
401 M Street Southwest
Washington DC, 20460

Dear Ms. Browner;

As chairman of the Agricultural Liaison Group in the EPA's Hudson River PCB Reassessment Process, I have been exposed to a great deal of information about the Superfund process in general and the Hudson River's PCB contamination in particular. I was disturbed to hear Senator Moynihan's remarks on the PCB issue at your confirmation hearing. I feel that the Senator is misinformed and certainly not speaking for all New Yorkers. Senator Moynihan apparently feels that nothing has been done about this site since 1978. The EPA's own ROD of 1984 certainly proves that this is not so. This site and problem has been studied extensively over the last 15 years.

This project is complicated and raises many scientific and economic issues. As you are aware, the project that Mr. Moynihan refers to would involve a massive and very expensive dredging project which, if done as New York DEC proposes, culminates in landfilling the sediments in Washington County farmland. As I am also president of Washington County Farm Bureau, I can tell you that most residents of the Upper Hudson area take issue with several aspects of this project.

1. Size of the area to be dredged: can enough contaminated sediments be captured to really have any significant impact on the health of the river? In fact, could the massive scouring of the project do more harm than good?

2. Landfilling sediments: is landfilling our problems really a good solution? This has certainly been questioned heavily for trash landfills. We would also object to loss of farm land due to this landfilling.

3. True toxicity of PCBs: will GOOD science prevail on determining the true hazards of these chemicals? How harmful are the present (and apparently decreasing) levels of PCBs in the river water column?

4. Other sources of contamination: There is evidence of

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other sources of contamination, both in the upper and lower river areas. Shouldn't this be the real emphasis for solving this problem? The most cost effective and immediate benefit to the river should be elimination of new contamination.

Please allow this process of reassessment to continue on a SOUND SCIENTIFIC basis. Don't allow this process to be short circuited by misinformed and emotional interest groups who I feel would view this whole project quite differently if it were landfilled in their "backyards". We all want to see the Hudson River clean and healthy but we must be realistic about what we can accomplish and how much benefit can really be gained. We must also carefully weigh ANY adverse impact of remediation against the perceived benefits.

The process should work if "good" science is allowed to prevail. I realize that USEPA has not made any decision on dredging or remediation but in light of Senator Moynihan's remarks, I thought you should be advised that Washington County Farm Bureau and New York Farm Bureau oppose the dredging project for PCBs that NYDEC has suggested. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Borden

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reply to:

cc: Senator Moynihan
Ann Rychlenski, USEPA Region II