New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site Fact Sheet – June 2019

EPA to Install Sediment Covers/Caps At Various Number of Locations in Upper Harbor

Summary: During 2019, remaining areas of the Upper Harbor subtidal dredging are expected to be substantially completed. In very limited areas of the Upper Harbor it may not be feasible or cost effective to address the remaining contamination with dredging, and instead EPA intends to install a number of multi-layer caps. The locations currently known to require covering/capping are shown in grey on the attached map.

EPA intends to issue a future remedial decision document regarding the installation of the cover/caps after all hybrid dredging is complete in the Upper Harbor and the locations of all areas requiring cover/caps is known.

These underwater barriers will generally consist of 2 layers; the bottom layer will consist of approximately 15 inches of silty sand which is designed to permanently sequester the PCB contaminated sediment below. The silty sand layer will be covered by a rocky armoring layer approximately 6 inches thick. The armoring layer will serve to protect the silty sand layer below. Periodic bathymetric surveys will be conducted to ensure the integrity of the subaqueous cover/caps.

A map showing the extent of the covers/caps already identified (in grey) is attached as Figure 1. Two of the caps projected for installation are along the embankment of the Coggeshall Street Bridge connecting New Bedford and Fairhaven, MA. The figure will be periodically updated if new locations are identified as remediation proceeds.

Why is EPA now placing these sediment covers/caps? Thanks to a record-breaking settlement with the successor corporation to Aerovox, Inc. (AVX Corp.), EPA now has the funds it needs to complete the majority of the selected remedy at the Site. EPA has identified a limited number of areas where such dredging is not advisable or cost-effective due to either the potential to destabilize existing structures and/or shoreline or to further release contaminants to the Upper Harbor. Placing the caps will allow the remainder of the Upper Harbor final pass dredging to proceed to completion pursuant to the 1998 Record of Decision for the New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site with very limited potential for recontamination.



Example Cross Section of Typical Cover/Cap

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