

**Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site  
Community Advisory Group**

**Meeting Summary  
September 23, 2004  
1:00 pm to 3:45 pm  
Albany City Library**

**Members Attending:** Chris Ballantyne, Jean Carlson, Dan Casey, Theresa Egan, Mark Fitzsimmons, David Gordon, Harry Guthel, John Lawler, Paul Lilac, Dan McGraw, Rodney Davis (alternate for Aaron Mair), (alternate for Manna Jo Greene), Rich Schiafo, Julia Stokes, Jeff Williams (alternate for Jock Williamson).

**CAG Liaisons Attending:** Bill Daigle (NYSDEC), Katherine Hudson (NYS Office of the Attorney General), Fred Ellerbusch (TOSC Coordinator), Doug Garvarini (EPA), Joan Gerhardt (GE), David King (EPA), David Kluesner (EPA), Deanna Ripstein (NYSDOH), Leo Rosales (EPA), Steven Sweeney (NYS Canal Corp).

**Others Attending:** Danielle Adams (EE), Laura DeGaetano (Albany County Planning), Joe Gardner (Appalachian Mountain Club), George Hodgson (Saratoga County EMC), George Leveille (Town of Bethlehem), Tom Kryzak (Air & Earth Works), James Kudlock (Controlled Extraction Technology), Ralph Brill (Greenwing Ventures), Matt Daunza (Times-Union), Lee Coleman (Daily Gazette), David Keehn (NYSDEC), Bob Foley (Department of the Interior), Rick Carr.

**Facilitators :** Larry Dixon, Patrick Field, Stacie Smith

**Members Absent:** Cecil Corbin-Mark, Richard Fuller, Gil Hawkins, Aaron Mair, Roland Mann, Merrilyn Pulver, John Rieger, Judy Schmidt-Dean, Lois Squire, Barbara Sweet, Jock Williamson.

**Key Action Items**

1. EE will call CAG members to determine who is interested in the New Bedford Site visit and then develop an RSVP list.
2. Sierra Club will look into renting a 15-person passenger van for the New Bedford site visit. EPA said it could reimburse SC for the van. EPA will look into obtaining a van that can take all government officials (including DEC and NOAA, as interested). EPA will follow-up with Sierra Club.
3. EPA will get lists to the CAG outlining community events EPA has participated in, which stakeholder groups it has worked with, and what public forums have been held in the last year.
4. CAG will email any comments it has on the CHASP to Fred Ellerbusch.

5. The agriculture-working group will provide an update at the next CAG meeting. The next meeting is October 4 at the Washington County offices.
6. CBI will send out the URL for the CAG website.
7. NYSDEC will give an update on the Hudson Falls site when the next design submission is due.
8. EPA will comment on a letter from George Hodgson regarding air quality monitoring at the proposed dewatering facilities.

### **Convening of Meeting**

The meeting began at 1:00 pm. The facilitator welcomed the CAG, walked through the agenda, and noted that because Alison Hess from EPA was on a tight time schedule, her presentation on the Dredge Area Delineation Report (DAD) would move to the front of the agenda.

### **Dredge Area Delineation Report (DAD)**

Alison Hess and Doug Garbarini from EPA presented on the dispute resolution process between EPA and GE regarding the Draft Phase 1 DAD and the Draft Phase 1 Target Area Identification (TAI). It was noted that of the 12 issues named in the dispute, both entities resolved three through further discussions. It was noted that two of the issues were not subject to dispute resolution, and the seven remaining required an EPA final decision. For a copy of the presentation, please go to [www.epa.gov/hudson](http://www.epa.gov/hudson).

EPA noted that it has the DAD and the TAI from GE and is in the process of reviewing it. The Phase 2 DAD is scheduled to be completed before January 15. More sampling needs to be done by GE before the end of 2004. EPA has approved the proposed sample sites from GE, and is requiring additional locations for samples. GE initiated sampling in August and the sampling should continue through October. It was noted that there would still need to be more sampling in 2005. The TAI evaluated 3 potential areas for Phase 1 Dredging: the northern end of the Thompson Island Pool (TIP): Griffin Island area and the Northumberland Dam Area. . Although no decision has been finalized, it is likely that Phase 1 dredging will take place in the northern end of the Thompson Island Pool (near Roger's Island) and in the Griffin Island area. In response to a question about an area between Hudson Falls and Fort Edward EPA noted that it has not been sampled because it is north of the project area.

The CAG had a number of questions after the presentation:

- *What is the significance of fine grain sediment versus cobble sediment?* In the first draft of the TAI GE was only recommending dredging in the northern TIP; EPA was concerned that the area proposed by GE would not be a suitable test of the engineering performance standard for resuspension. EPA and GE agree that it makes sense to work from north to south if possible. However, EPA wanted to ensure that an area was included in the Phase 1 dredging that had sufficient fine-grained sediment to provide an adequate test of the resuspension performance standard. Areas around Griffin Island and

Northumberland are believed to have the types and quantities of sediments that would be suitable to meet this objective.

- *If dredging starts in the south and goes north and there is a spill, will there be any form of monitoring to ensure that if a spill happens that downriver it will be detected?* EPA replied that any pipes used would be double lined to catch any sort of spillage. Also barges will be equipped with a freeboard to catch spills. There will also be continuous monitoring downriver.

## **Introductions and Announcements**

It was noted that there were many new faces at the meeting so CAG members introduced themselves.

It was announced that a conference would be held October 5, titled “Who Is Doing What.” Information was circulated to the CAG regarding the meeting. It was also announced that tourist and economic revitalization is ongoing in Old Saratoga on the Hudson through Saratoga PLAN (Preserving Land and Nature). For more information on the project, go to [www.saratogaplan.org](http://www.saratogaplan.org).

Meetings for November and December were discussed. Due to the holidays it was decided that there would likely be only one CAG meeting. One possible date discussed would be December 9. It was also noted that Interagency Working Group meeting would be December 13.

## **Meeting Summary**

The July meeting summary was finalized, as there were no comments or corrections for it.

## **Community Involvement Review**

EPA presented on its community involvement activities from August 2003 to August 2004 and requested feedback and input on how they could improve. The CAG requested that EPA provide information outlining all community events EPA has participated in, which stakeholder groups it has worked with, and what public forums have been held in the last year.

The CAG provided anonymous written feedback to EPA on its Community Involvement work. The CAG responded in three areas: ideas for 04/05 initiatives input on the tools used (how are they working and ways to improve them), and input on EPA’s overall approach. Below is how the CAG responded, verbatim, to each of the three areas.

Ideas for 04/05 Initiatives

- GE should mount a major PR campaign like they did a few years ago to calm the hysteria they created surrounding this project.

- Public Forums/Community Events. Missing piece: What are the health effects of PCBs? Marian Olson addressed risk assessment, but there are more current info and studies available. Recommend evacuation for upriver communities on potential health impacts, i.e., Dr. David Carpenter SUNY Albany, School of public health.
- You need to do some workshops on how to get a job or a contract from this project.
- When there is a more definite schedule can Leo and/or David go to Town Board meetings to inform all elected officials?
- Invitation to the general public to walk in the Hudson River Field Office with questions or to gather information—good at beginning but not very inviting today!
- Support broader school education efforts. Consider field trips to field office.

#### Tools

- Just the facts! Very well done
- Consider education kiosks at parks and boat ramps.
- Roadmap is excellent tool.
- Maps/visual aids/events displays are excellent. Please plan to come to June Hudson River Revival (Croton, NY), June 18 – 19, 2005. Ulster County Fair, Dutchess county fair, outside project area; outside area impacted by PCBs.
- Work with DOH to do more health education—talk more about the positive aspects of this project.
- Greater visibility below the Troy Dam—don't forget about the lower 160 miles of this site. Post repositories on your website. Speaker bureau. How can we help you?
- Factsheets are great—they should be in every library in every community along 200 miles of the river.
- Less meetings, more community events, to where people are—use existing venues. Display boards are great—use them more widely at all county fairs along 200 miles of the river.

#### Tone and Style: Overall Approach

- Leo is very patient in difficult groups.
- People still view everything the EPA says with suspicion.
- Clarity and accuracy—excellent. Thought the EPA has been being transparent—generally has been. Have some concerns about the transparency regarding the Brownfield Interagency Meeting.
- Community involvement has come along way in the past year. I give it an A+.
- EPA has done a reasonably good job of outreach considering its lack of hard and fast answers. Dave King is excellent to work with.

#### **Brief Updates**

*Community Health and Safety Plan (CHASP)*. The TOSC advisor reported on CHASP work. Overall the advisor reported that he advised EPA to use a framework approach when developing the CHASP and look at different activities in each area. Three areas of concern were highlighted:

1. Emphasize more coordination of sites.
2. Ensure that there is access to the river by HAZMAT services.
3. Train HAZMAT personal so they can be prepared for any possible problems.

The TOSC advisor also handed out a document outlining his thoughts on the CHASP for the CAG to review. The advisor reported he and EPA had a productive meeting and that the next step would be for EPA to work with GE in the development of the CHASP. The advisor reiterated that this is an ongoing process and that a broader CHASP would be useful. He explained that there is still plenty of time to develop such a document since it is not due until fall of 2005. If anyone has any comments or concerns about the CHASP, please email the TOSC advisor, Fred Ellerbush at [ellerbus@ADM.NJIT.EDU](mailto:ellerbus@ADM.NJIT.EDU).

*Facility Siting Update.* EPA reported that detailed responses are being put together that will be sent to everyone that gave comments to EPA on the facility siting process.

*New Bedford Site Tour.* The tour of the New Bedford Harbor dredge site will take place October 19. EPA reported that they are trying to secure a bus, but the procurement of it has been difficult. About seven CAG members at the meeting said they would be interested in touring the facility. A couple of transportation options discussed include possibly reimbursing CAG members for mileage if they carpool, or EPA hiring a van that can take everyone (including DEC and NOAA, as interested). Sierra Club said it might be possible to use its 15-passenger bus. EPA said it could reimburse SC for expenses on its van. If there is room in the vehicle liaisons and alternates could attend the tour, however CAG members would have priority.

*Washington County Fair Update.* EPA reported on their outreach efforts at the Washington County Fair, stating that it was great to get to know the community and hear their concerns. EPA went on to say that it would like to do more activities like that.

*Interagency Working Group (IWG) / Federal Grantor Event.* EPA explained the outcome of the CAG subcommittee meeting on the Interagency Working Group event. The communities that are preferred sites for the dewatering facility will be invited to prepare presentations for the panel. The remaining communities will be invited to observe the event, with the possibility that the event could be replicated. A representative from the IWG will be at the October CAG meeting to discuss the event. It was noted that this would not just be an informational meeting, but an interactive, working meeting focused on specific communities.

*Agricultural Working Group.* There will be a meeting of the group at the Washington County Offices October 4.

*CAG Website Update.* The CAG website has been revised and is ready for use. The URL will be sent out to everyone. The site will contain all information relating to the CAG.

The CAG inquired and made comments about the following:

- *Hudson Falls Update.* NYSDEC noted that it could give the CAG an update on the Hudson Falls project when the next design submission is complete.

- *Air Quality Monitoring.* Some members of the CAG explained they would like to see a full year of baseline monitoring at the dewatering facilities. A member from Saratoga County said he would give a letter to EPA on the matter so EPA can respond.
- *Outfall Update.* NYSDEC explained there is still PCB oil in the bedrock and that they are discussing the issue with GE.
- It was noted that some citizens from Schaghticoke that attended the site tour in the morning did not know whom to turn to at GE for information, nor did they know how to reach GE. Joan Gerhardt from Behan Communications noted that she attends all CAG meetings and is the point of contact for GE.
- A CAG member asked if GE could be more active in presenting to the CAG on areas/documents where they are doing most of the work and attend more meetings, such as the CAG tour of the Schaghticoke site earlier in the day. It was noted that GE did a good job of working on the Performance Standards with communities and that GE was involved, visible, and listened to the communities. Another member expressed concern that there has been no answer from anyone, GE, EPA, or others, on if and how community benefits – a fund of money as a small percentage of the overall project -- might work. When asked about community mitigation benefits, GE's representative explained that GE has not received a written request to discuss this issue with local communities. GE's representative said this was EPA's project and it was GE's understanding that EPA was taking the lead on discussing community mitigation issues with local communities. EPA responded that it has been discussing this issue with local communities and, regarding potential federal monies, hopes to bring together representatives from various state and federal agencies to discuss this issue further once the site or sites for dewatering facility(ies) are finalized.
- The CAG expressed its concern that communities hosting a dewatering facility should receive benefits to mitigate some of the potential impacts to the economy. Some members said the CAG members could work together to petition elected officials on this matter, if there was interest by individual members of the CAG.

### **October Agenda**

The facilitator outlined a number of agenda items for the October CAG meeting based on member input.

- Baseline air monitoring data – Saratoga County
- Floodplain field work update
- Habitat Delineation Assessment Update
- Dredge Area Delineation Report update
- Brownfields Interagency Working Group Briefing
- Culture Resources Briefing
- Site Tour Update
- Facility Siting Update
- Nov/Dec Meeting: December 9, Peebles Island State Park, if available
- Updates

As the meeting closed, a presentation by a community group from Schaghticoke protesting the site as a preferred site was reviewed by the CAG.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:45 pm. The next meeting will be held October 28, at a site to be determined.