

For Release: IMMEDIATE
Wednesday, February 17, 2010

Contact: Yancey Roy
(518) 402-8000

**NEW YORK SUBMITS COMMENTS ON “PHASE 1” OF
HUDSON RIVER PCB DREDGING PROJECT**

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) today submitted its comments and recommendations to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the first phase of the dredging of the Upper Hudson River to remove PCB-contaminated sediments near Fort Edward.

The long-awaited and historic dredging project, being conducted by General Electric Co. under an agreement with EPA, began last May and is slated to take six years. DEC is providing oversight of the dredging work, along with the state Department of Health and the state Canal Corporation. DEC has performed field oversight of numerous operations, including debris removal, sediment transfer, scow movement and several types of dredging. DEC also reviewed data generated during the project and participated in daily and weekly EPA planning meetings. DEC’s comments on “Phase 1” are contained in the report released today, *“Hudson River PCBs Federal Superfund Site: New York State Report on Observations from Phase 1 Dredging and Recommendations on Changes for Phase 2.”*

In its report, DEC acknowledges that the successful completion of the first phase of dredging will have many long-term benefits for the river and the community, but makes recommendations for future phases of the project to achieve the desired cleanup goals.

“This critically important – and historic -- cleanup is off to a good start,” DEC Commissioner Pete Grannis said. “A significant amount of contaminated material was removed and important data was generated to help make adjustments as the project moves forward. When it does, New York will continue to monitor the progress to ensure that the environment and the people who live along the Hudson are protected.”

Among the adjustments DEC recommended:

- Fine tune GE’s design estimates for the scope and depth of contamination in the river bottom. Underestimates of the depth contributed to resuspension of the contaminated material in the water, leading to exceeded standards. Adjusting dredge maps also would improve cleanup of the river bottom.

(MORE)

-2-

- Improve off-loading operations at the de-watering facility to prevent the stockpiling of contaminated material. This would reduce down time and reduce the potential for the exposed material to create air quality issues.
- Improve the containment and removal of PCB-oil sheens on the water surface. This would reduce the potential for PCB materials to become concentrated in the air and water.

DEC's comments are available at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37562.html>

###

10-28