6 Next Steps in the Facility Siting Process

This Draft Facility Siting Report is the third in a series of documents that define and describe the approach and methodology implemented during the facility siting process for the Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site. Previously the Concept Document and the Tech Memo (Facility Siting Update Report 1) were released to the public. In conjunction with the release of the documents, public availability sessions and/or forums were held to discuss the process and content of the documents.

The purpose of this document is to report on the results of the analyses that were conducted on the PCSs, the selection of the FCSs, a summary of site-specific investigations of each FCS, the development and evaluation of Group 3 criteria, the identification of the sites considered suitable for the design, construction, and operation of a sediment processing/transfer facility (see Section 4), and the selection of Recommended Sites that will advance into the intermediate design process (see Section 5). The selection of the locations for sediment processing/transfer facilities for Phase 1 and Phase 2 dredging will result from further evaluation of the Recommended Sites.

6.1 Modification in Site Selection Process

It has been EPA's intent that after releasing the Facility Siting Report, that a site, or sites, will be selected in spring 2004 for the location of sediment processing/transfer facilities to support Phase 1 dredging activities. The site(s) that will support Phase 2 dredging were to be selected in summer 2004. However, some of the information that would allow EPA and the RD Team to make a decision on the Select Sites that would make the project most successful, is not yet available.

In order to ensure that site(s) are not prematurely excluded and that the site(s) that offers the greatest potential benefit to the project are selected, EPA has decided that the announcements of final site selections should be deferred until late fall of 2004. This modification will allow additional key project design information/evaluations (e.g., rail and barge transportation logistics, lockage analyses, determination of dredging methods, etc.) to be factored into the decision-making process.

6.2 Key Design Factors Supporting Site Selection

Several important factors or major design considerations affect site selection. The degree to which each piece of information influences the site selection process varies.

- **Design Optimization.** Optimization occurs as design progresses from preliminary into intermediate through final design. Much of this optimization will occur over the next six months. EPA believes that key design optimization information would benefit the site selection process. An example would be a lockage analysis to optimize productivity.

- **Evaluation of Identified Factors.** Information regarding site benefits, potential limitations, and additional design considerations will be evaluated further in terms of the design requirements/needs identified by the RD Team. For example, as the design team continues to evaluate rail conditions/logistics and where to use hydraulic dredging, additional benefits and/or limitations may be discovered that may affect site selection.

- **Comparative Analysis.** Further information to be developed by the RD Team will be compared with the following project considerations:
  - Achieving engineering performance standards;
  - Achieving quality of life performance standards;
  - Minimizing impacts to communities near the sites; and
  - Project cost.

The RD Team is continuing its studies on barge and rail issues. It is anticipated that transportation by rail may require using more than one rail company and/or some off-site rail yards. It is also expected that multiple modes of transportation (rail, barging, and possibly cargo vessel shipping) could be needed to move material from a facility to a disposal site. The ability to transport processed sediments in a safe, efficient, and reliable manner will be key to the success of the project. The results of these studies may indicate that logistical issues associated with transportation by barge and/or rail (e.g., the quantity of processed sediment and backfill that will be transported) may require selecting sites that are close to transportation facilities or have key beneficial characteristics associated with those modes of transportation. Issues associated with transportation by barge and rail are complex but are being addressed during design by the RD Team. There will also be further analyses to determine the effects that locking may impose on productivity, cost, efficiency, and the decision whether to utilize hydraulic dredging.

EPA expects that, with input from the RD Team, site selection can be completed in the late fall of 2004 for Phase 1 and Phase 2 dredging. There is also a possibility that the Phase 1 site(s) could be used to complete both phases of the project.

6.3 Community Involvement

EPA made a commitment to conduct the facility siting process involving communities and gathering public input. Figure 6-1 summarizes the next steps in the facility siting process. Public forums will be held in spring 2004 in order to present the process of evaluating the FCSs, the identification of the Suitable Sites, and those sites recommended to advance into the intermediate design phase. These forums will provide interested citizens with the opportunity to fully review the facility siting process and to ask EPA questions. EPA will open a formal 60-day comment period on the Draft Facility Siting Report.

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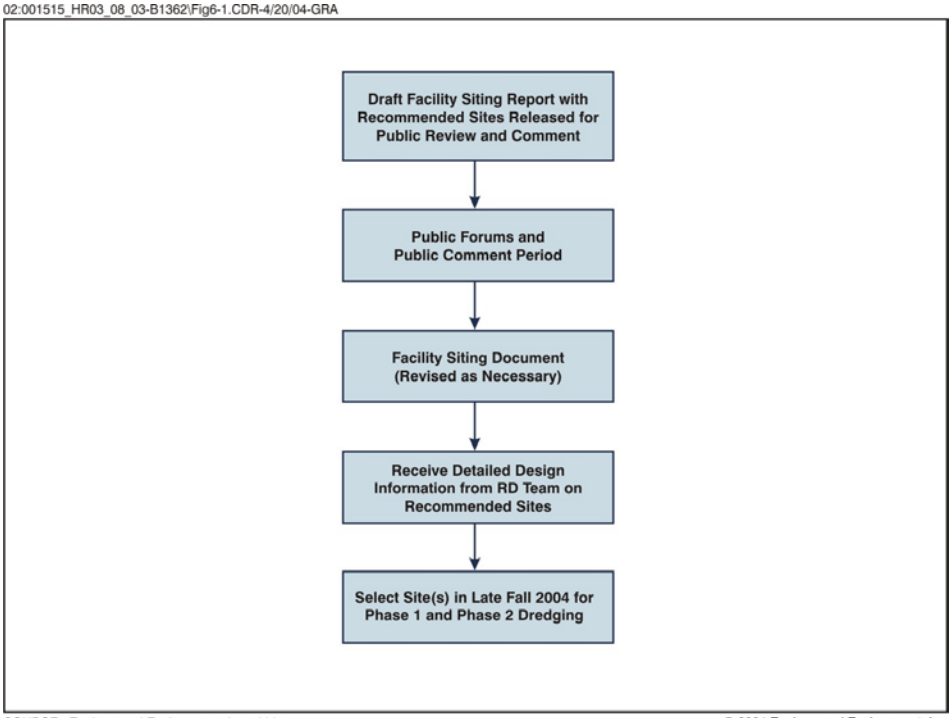

SOURCE: Ecology and Environment, Inc., 2004

Figure 6-1 Summary of Next Steps Within the Facility Siting Process

Following the public forums and comment period, EPA will develop responses to public comments, seek additional input from the RD Team, revise the document as needed, and issue the Facility Siting Report. Following that, EPA will select and announce the Phase 1 and Phase 2 sediment processing/transfer facility selection(s).

With the three Recommended Sites identified, it is EPA's goal to continue a dialogue with communities during the final selection of the sediment processing/transfer facilities, as well as during the design, construction, and operation of the sites. EPA will work diligently with those communities by providing updates through fact sheets and local town meetings. The goal of this outreach and involvement is to find ways to minimize the impacts of the facility(ies) on people's daily lives, and ensure that their questions are answered and their needs addressed.