

News Release



Region 2 - New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands

EPA Announces Agreement with GE to Further Investigate Upper Hudson River Floodplain Comprehensive Study to Cost About \$20.5 Million

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(New York, N.Y. – October 1, 2014) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced today that General Electric Company has agreed to conduct a comprehensive study of the contamination in the shoreline areas of the upper Hudson River. Cleanup of the Hudson River PCBs Superfund site has been ongoing since 2009 when river dredging began. Under the latest agreement with GE, the company will evaluate contamination in shoreline areas that are subject to flooding, called floodplains. The river and parts of the floodplain are contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). PCBs are chemicals that persist in the environment and can affect the immune, reproductive, nervous and endocrine systems and are potentially cancer-causing. For a period of 30 years, ending in the late 1970's, PCBs were discharged from two GE capacitor manufacturing plants located in Hudson Falls and Fort Edward, New York. Once PCBs entered the river they were deposited and mixed with the sediment at many locations on the river bottom and at some locations along the shoreline.

Under the agreement announced today, GE will investigate the PCB contamination in a 40-mile stretch of the Hudson River floodplain from Hudson Falls to Troy, New York and will develop cleanup options. The estimated value of this investigation work is \$20.5 million. Under the agreement GE will also pay for EPA's costs in overseeing the work and reimburse EPA for \$3.5 million in floodplain-related past costs.

"Dredging the river and stopping PCBs from moving down it is the main point of the current Superfund work on the Hudson River. We are now actively addressing the issues of possible PCB contamination

on the shoreline properties and floodplains,” said Regional Administrator Judith A. Enck. “I encourage the public, local governments and others to become educated and informed on this important aspect of the cleanup. This \$20.5 million agreement with GE to comprehensively examine these issues is an important step in our work to protect public health and the environment.”

The EPA’s 2002 decision to dredge approximately 2.65 million cubic yards of PCB-contaminated sediment from the upper Hudson River also required that contamination in the floodplain be evaluated. Since 2000, the EPA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and GE have collected over 7,000 soil samples on more than 500 properties. GE also has installed soil or stone covers to prevent exposure to PCBs and/or installed warning signs on several properties under a 2008 legal agreement with EPA. These measures are temporary, pending completion of the comprehensive study and the selection of a final cleanup plan for the floodplain. The EPA will decide on the final cleanup plan with input from the public.

The Superfund program operates on the principle that polluters should pay for the cleanups, rather than passing the costs to taxpayers. GE has paid for or performed the majority of the cleanup work at the site. All work being performed by GE under the agreement announced today is being conducted under EPA oversight.

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