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December 29, 2000

The Honorable Norine Noonan
Assistant Administrator for Research and Development
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Ronald Reagan Building, Room 41209
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Dr. Noonan:

I am transmitting to you a copy of the Executive Summary of the National Research Council's report entitled *A Risk Management Strategy for PCB-Contaminated Sediments*. The full report will be transmitted within a couple of months. This report was prepared by the Committee on Remediation of PCB Contaminated Sediments under Grant R827175-01-0 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the National Academy of Sciences.

It is highly unusual for the National Research Council to release an executive summary of a report prior to the full report. However, we are aware that decisions to address contaminated sediments at sites around the country involve costly options, that they are controversial, and that some of these decisions are pending. We are also aware that many persons involved in these pending decisions expect our committee to recommend a preferred remedial technology for such sites.

Given this background, we feel an obligation to provide this executive summary in order to make it clear that our committee has concluded that there is no single preferred technology that is most effective, least costly, and least risky, given the different circumstances involved at each contaminated site. Instead, as the summary indicates, the committee's report will provide a framework and principles to guide the assessments of remedial choices at specific sites, rather than a generalized evaluation of technological options.

We hope that this executive summary, and the report to follow, will be useful to EPA and others in addressing the many sites around the country that contain contaminated sediments.

Sincerely,



Bruce Alberts
Chairman
National Research Council

cc: Dennis Timberlake
National Risk Management Research Lab
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
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