

# SIERRA CLUB • New England Chapter

3 JOY STREET, ROOM 12, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, 02108 • 617-227-5339

October 17, 1985

Site: New Bedford  
Break: 4.1  
Other: 48612

Michael P. Deland, Administrator  
Environmental Protection Agency, Region I  
JFK Federal Building  
Boston MA

Dear Mr. Deland: *Mike,*

First, I would like to commend EPA for initiating these additional studies of the impacts of the proposed dredging and disposal alternatives for the PCB "hot-spots" in the Acushnet River.

However, I must also express great disappointment that these studies will be limited to the dredging and disposal options identified in the Feasibility Study. As you are aware, the Sierra Club commented on these options in 1984, and we stated that none of the options described offered an acceptable permanent cleanup solution that would insure the water quality of the river, New Bedford harbor, Buzzards Bay, and their environs in the future. All of the options, we felt, were sure-fire recipes for Superfund dumps of the future which our grandchildren or great-grandchildren will have to clean up.

Therefore we are urgently requesting you tonight to expand these proposed studies to include pilot tests of various PCB destruction technologies on samples of the highly contaminated sediments from the river. EPA's original RAMP on the New Bedford site listed possible destruction technologies in experimental or developmental stages which should be tried, including incineration, extraction procedures, biological treatment, and others. Conducting such tests as part of your further studies might even lead to significant technological breakthroughs which would benefit other PCB-Superfund sites as well as this one.

We call your attention to the recent effects of the heavy rain accompanying Hurricane Gloria on the Alton Mine superfund site in eastern Pennsylvania. At this site, EPA's "cleanup" solution was to plug up the holes in a tunnel where hazardous waste had formerly been dumped, adjacent to the Susquehanna River. During the recent storm, the "cleaned up" site started leaking and continues to leak toxic waste into the river.

We fear that EPA will propose another such faulty cleanup in the Acushnet River, either by choosing shore-side containment of the PCB-contaminated sediments or by choosing the hydraulic control/channelization technique. The Acushnet River and the people around it should not be burdened with this kind of eternal pollution. We hope you will consider expanding these studies as we have recommended.

Truly yours,

*Priscilla Chopman*  
Priscilla Cnapman

Executive Director, New England Sierra Club