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## MEMORANDUM

To: File

From: Alan C. Nye, Ph.D.

Concerning: Trip to New Bedford Harbor and Acushnet River Estuary on October 6, 1989

Date: October 12, 1989

TERRA Representatives Present: Robert C. James, Ph.D., Alan C. Nye, Ph.D.

Dr. James and I arrived in the Greater New Bedford Harbor Area on Friday, October 6, 1989 at approximately 9:15 am. After some preliminary planning, Dr. James, Anne Rogers (Nutter, McClennen, and Fish), Leonard Sarapas (Balsam Environmental Consultants), Rick Hughto (Rizzo Associates) and I visited the following locations: The Cove Area and playground on the western shore of the Upper Estuary, the industrialized western shore of the Upper Estuary south of the Wood Street Bridge, Popes Island, the eastern side of the Upper Estuary (Fairhaven side), and the Fort Rodman Beach area. Conditions at the time of the visit were sunny. The temperature was warm enough such that a jacket was not needed.

### Observations regarding the Cove Area and playground:

There was no one present in the playground area when we visited. Easy access to the Estuary shore was prevented by a 6 foot high chain link fence. Leonard Sarapas and I were able to scale the fence with some difficulty and make our way through thick underbrush to the shore. The tide was in and the condition of the area was best described as marshy. Little of the shoreline was visible when we visited. Industrial trash and refuse were scattered throughout the underbrush up to the marshy area near the shoreline. The shoreline at this location also smelled of sewage. Paper resembling toilet tissue was stuck to the marsh grass at some locations on the shore.

### Impressions:

An older child could conceivably scale the chain link fence and visit the shoreline. However, there is little reason to visit this shoreline. An older child might scale the fence to retrieve a ball that might have been thrown over the fence. However, this activity would not necessarily bring a child in contact with sediments at the shoreline.

There is little reason to believe that an adult would be attracted to the shoreline in the Cove Area. Lack of easy access and the absence of recreational opportunities would make this area relatively unattractive to adults.

Due to the presence of the fence, the shoreline should be considered completely inaccessible to children under the age of six.

For these reasons, the adult and the 0-5 year-old child should not be considered as potential receptors for this area. In summary, these observations provide little justification for consideration of adults and 0-5 year old children as potential receptors in the Cove Area.

Observations regarding the industrialized eastern shore of the Upper Estuary south of the Wood Street Bridge:

No easy access point to the shore was identified on the industrialized western shore of the Upper Estuary. The area visited was south of the Aerovox facility. Easy access to the shoreline was interrupted by bulkheads. This would preclude exposure to sediments for persons of any age.

Impressions:

Persons would not visit the industrialized western shore of the Upper Estuary.

Observations regarding Popes Island:

With the exception of a small park, there were no areas which would provide recreational opportunities. The shoreline of the park area was covered with riprap. Trash and refuse were strewn over much of the riprap. Cars were parked in the area, but no person was seen within 50 feet of the shoreline.

Impressions:

Popes Island provides little in the way of recreational opportunity or inducement to visit the shoreline. There is no reason to suspect that adults or children aged 0-5 years would be exposed to sediments in these areas. The area might be considered as a potential exposure point for older children. However, the chance of any contact with sediment in this location should be considered very remote. Realistically, I see little reason to include this area as a potential point for human contact with sediment.

Observations regarding the eastern side of the Upper Estuary (Fairhaven side):

The eastern side of the Upper Estuary was accessed by walking through the woods near the substation. Paths were observed through wooded areas. Access to the shoreline required approximately 10 minutes of walking and climbing through underbrush. Matted marsh grass was observed throughout the Upper Estuary up to the shoreline. The sediments at this location of the Upper Estuary were pebbly and littered with some trash. There is little reason to think that a person would walk in these sediments with bare feet. No person was seen anywhere near the

shoreline of the western side of the Upper Estuary area. Observations from a rock outcropping which afforded good views of most of the Estuary confirmed this fact.

Impression:

The eastern shore of the Upper Estuary was a reasonably pleasant place to visit. However, it would be conservative to assume that an adult or older child would visit this location on a regular basis. This area would not be accessible to a child 0-5 years of age. The "Draft Final Baseline Public Health Risk Assessment; New Bedford Harbor Feasibility Study" indicates that an adult or older child could visit the area 20 or 100 times per year. This number of visits to the eastern shore of the Upper Estuary should clearly be considered excessive. The risk assessment also assumed that a 0-5 year old child could visit the Upper Estuary 1 or 20 times per year. From my observations, this assumption is extremely implausible.

Observations regarding the Fort Rodman Beach area:

The beach at Fort Rodman was easily accessed. The beach was sandy but covered with all kinds of trash and broken glass.

Impressions:

The beach was so lacking in aesthetic appeal that it is hard to imagine that anyone would be attracted to the area on a regular basis. Such a site cannot be considered conducive to walking barefooted. The assumption that anyone would wade or swim in this area is questionable at best. It is also extremely unlikely that a 0-5 year old child would be brought to the area to walk along this beach.

The Depositions of Bernard Cambra and David A. Kennedy support the above observations. It is interesting to note from the deposition of Bernard Cambra that in the 30 years that he has lived at the 20 Shawmut Avenue in New Bedford, he has never seen a person fishing in the inner harbor area or bathing or shellfishing in the harbor inside the hurricane dike. Likewise, to the best of his knowledge, David A. Kennedy, a 24 year resident of New Bedford and head of maintenance of recreational facilities in New Bedford, had never seen anyone bathing on the New Bedford or Fairhaven side of the harbor. These observations by long time residents of the Greater New Bedford area clearly serve to question of reality of the assumptions of the "Draft Final Baseline Public Health Risk Assessment; New Bedford Harbor Feasibility Study" which indicate that there is a high level of human contact (20 or 100 times per year) with sediments north of the hurricane barrier.