

New Bedford Harbor  
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Summary of the Meeting Held November 6, 1997  
of the New Bedford Harbor Superfund Forum

In attendance at the session were:

Facilitator

Michael Keating

HARC

Jim Simmons

Concerned Parents of Fairhaven

Claudia Kirk

New Bedford City Council

George Rogers

DEP

Paul Craffey

Allexe Law-Flood

New Bedford Mayor's Office

Molly Fontaine

Downwind Coalition

Neal Balboni

Carol Sanz

EPA

Angela Bonarrigo

Jim Brown

Cindy Catri

Dave Dickerson

Harley Laing

David Peterson

The meeting, which commenced at 6:25 p.m., was videotaped for subsequent broadcast on cable television.

A summary of the last Forum meeting was reviewed and approved by the Forum.

Dave Dickerson provided members of the Forum with a copy of the Report on the Effects of the Hot Spot Dredging Operations: New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site, dated October, 1997, which provides an analysis of the effects of the hot spot dredging on the environment and air and water quality. Dave Dickerson also reported on the status of the preparation of Rod-II, which should be ready for publication within the "next several months."

At its last meeting, Forum members had inquired about the status of the fund created by the PRPs to finance remediation of the New Bedford Harbor superfund site. EPA reported that the fund contains \$76 million dedicated to the New Bedford Harbor clean-up, of which some \$15-16 million represents interest.

Turning to the major focus of the evening, there was a brief discussion of the task about to be undertaken by the Forum. Consensus was defined as an effort to come up with a remediation technology for treating the hot spot sediments that everyone on the Forum can live with, even if the selected remedy is not everyone's preferred choice. There was a reminder that EPA is required by statute to make the actual selection of an appropriate technology, but EPA voiced the hope, and

expectation, that the Forum will be able to agree on and recommend a remedy.

Cindy Catri reviewed the criteria or factors for analysis of the treatment alternatives before the Forum. There are two threshold criteria that any technology must meet in order to be considered. These include overall protection of human health and the environment and compliance with ARRARS (applicable, relevant and appropriate requirements, established principally in state statutes and regulations).

A second cluster of "balancing" criteria includes long-term effectiveness and permanence; reduction of toxicity, mobility or volume through treatment; short-term effectiveness; implementability; and cost. Each of these criteria embrace, in turn, a number of other requirements and considerations. Finally, state and community acceptance of the proposed remedy, or modifying criteria, must also be weighed. While DEP provides input on acceptability from the Commonwealth's perspective, the Forum is the major source of information on community acceptance of any proposed remedy. In addition, the selection process requires EPA to provide an opportunity for the broader community to respond to and comment on the selected remedy. EPA prepared and provided Forum members with a helpful matrix combining information from the feasibility studies on each proposed alternative together with the nine categories of criteria.

The Forum did not discuss directly the Sea Change panel held on October 31, but at least two of the technology vendors who participated in the treatability studies had either communicated with, or sought the opportunity to communicate with, the Forum to respond to some of the opinions and comments expressed by Sea Change panel members. There was discussion of the appropriateness of providing the vendors with one last opportunity to address the Forum. After considerable debate, it was decided to give the vendors a half-hour each at the Forum's next meeting on December 1, 1997, to provide any relevant supplemental information on each technology's performance and scaling-up problems. EPA, with assistance from Carol Sanz, will prepare a notification to the vendors of the opportunity to address the Forum.

The Forum then began its analysis of the eleven available alternatives. It is the position of EPA, stated by Jim Brown, that all of the listed eleven alternatives are technologically implementable, notwithstanding any reservations expressed by Sea Change panel members. The Forum discussed two alternatives before the meeting was concluded, namely, no further action and in-place capping. The plan is for the Forum to ponder and discuss each alternative before beginning an intensive effort to eliminate candidates and narrow the range of choices.

The meeting ended with a revision of the schedule of future meetings. The next meeting, at which treatability study vendors will make their presentations, is scheduled for **Monday, December 1, 1997**. The meeting scheduled earlier for November 17 is cancelled. Subsequent meetings for the continuing evaluation of proposed remedies were

scheduled for **Monday, December 8** and **Tuesday, December 16**. All of these meetings will be held at the Greater New Bedford Vocational High School.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Again, the next meeting of the Forum is scheduled for **Monday, December 1, 1997** at the Greater New Bedford Vocational High School at 6:00 p.m.