



EPA releases cleanup plan for the Hudson River

By Eric Lind

Every year the Department of Health prints health advisories for the consumption of fish from New York state waters. For the upper Hudson River, four words from this report, "all species, eat none," reveal much about the existing environmental conditions.

The words expose a harsh paradox...that beneath a celebrated recovery (due mostly to the sewage-harnessing influence of the Clean Water Act), the Hudson River's sediments and wildlife remain badly contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

Over a 30-year period, two General Electric capacitor plants legally discharged more than one million pounds of PCBs into the river, ending in 1977 when PCBs were outlawed for manufacture and use in the United States. The oily compounds had found their way into the river's food web, and the sweeping health advisory was put in place. However, significant amounts

continued to seep into the river from PCB saturated soils and bedrock found underneath the two GE facilities. The river remains one of the largest Superfund sites in the country.

In December 2000 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a thorough and coherent action plan to remove PCBs from the Hudson River. Behind the plan is a serious concern for public and ecological health of the Hudson River Valley. There is a frightening array of detrimental effects believed to be caused by PCB exposure. PCBs are probable carcinogens that create learning and developmental problems in children and disrupt our delicate biochemistry by altering hormone levels and suppressing immune systems. Research on wildlife show impacts on birds, mink, river otter and other animals as these toxins continue to amass through the food web. One can walk along any riverfront park with fishing access and see that people are not exempt from the main pathway to PCB exposure, fish consumption.

The EPA's proposal focuses on 40

miles of the upper Hudson, from Fort Edward to the Federal Dam at Troy. It calls for the removal of over 2.6 million cubic yards of contaminated sediments from "hotspots," areas where PCBs have accumulated in high levels on the river bottom and still have the potential to poison. These areas are now the main source of PCBs to the rest of the Hudson River ecosystem. Proven environmental dredging techniques will be used to minimize the dispersal of contaminants downriver. The dredged materials would be treated and transported away from the Hudson River Valley to a facility specifically designed to accept and contain them. After the project is designed, it is estimated it will take five years to complete, a mere tick of the Hudson's ancient geologic clock.

The research shows that PCBs are not covered by new sediments and do not sufficiently break down to benign compounds, but instead remain mobile and toxic. The problem has been exhaustively studied, and the results presented by the EPA have been reviewed by five independent panels of

experts. With a projected bill of \$460 million and pending accountability under the Superfund law, General Electric is contradicting the EPA's conclusions with an unfortunate and misleading media campaign. However the findings are clear...dredging is the right move for the Hudson River.

Support for EPA's plan includes the endorsement of Governor Pataki. The plan will not be completed until after public comments on the proposal are heard, detailed information is available at www.epa.gov/region02/superfund/ Hudson, www.clearwater.org, www.scenichudson.org, or by calling the EPA at (212) 637-3672. Comments should be sent to Hudson River PCBs Public Comment, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 290 Broadway 19th Floor, New York, NY 10007-1866, or e-mailed to HudsonComment.Region2@epa.gov. A final recommendation will be presented later this year. We hope that EPA will continue to stay on course for the restoration of our most treasured Hudson River.

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When you are needed to make a difference in Congress, we'll e-mail you a sample letter that you can tailor as you see fit. After your alterations, print the letter and send it directly to your member of Congress. Your voice will join thousands of others calling on Congress to support conservation issues. The network is completely free and will not cost you anything.

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Audubon hires new development officer, membership coordinator

Staff Report

Sandra Doring joins development staff

Audubon New York is pleased to announce the addition of Sandra Doring to its development staff. Sandy will serve as the development officer for the New York state program and has assumed responsibility for a pool of major donors, corporations and foundations. In addition, Sandy will help facilitate the direct mail program, special events and Birdathon.



Sandra Doring

Sandy comes to Audubon from the Junior Museum, which just completed a \$5 million capital campaign. As director of development for the Junior Museum, Sandy was responsible for meeting annual fund, membership and the capital campaign goals.

Sandy lives in Averill Park, has held a lifelong commitment to conservation and is an active birder.

Jana Goldman to head member recruitment

Audubon New York is pleased to announce the hiring of Jana Goldman as membership coordinator. Jana comes to Audubon with several years of experience in membership recruitment and services. Most recently, she served as membership director for the YMCA, and prior to that, she instituted membership strategies to recruit and maintain members for an area museum.

As Audubon New York's membership coordinator, Jana's first step will be to meet with all chapters

and provide an overview of existing membership recruitment strategies and techniques, as well as member services currently provided by our chapters. Jana will also work with Audubon's national membership department.



Jana Goldman

Ultimately, Jana will create strategies that can be used by all of New York's chapters to increase local membership, enhance chapter volunteer bases and create local fund-raising bases for chapters.

Audubon NEW YORK

The formal name of the New York State Office has changed from National Audubon Society of New York State to Audubon New York.

The name change, which originated from National headquarters, promises to increase public recognition and identification of Audubon. The National Board's objective is to broaden Audubon's appeal to a greater variety of people. The commitment to content and quality of our work shall remain the same.

The office remains at 200 Trillium lane, Albany, New York, 12203. The telephone is (518) 869-9731.