



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION II

JACOB K. JAVITS FEDERAL BUILDING

NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10278-0012

Michael Eckstein
Vietnam Veterans of America
New Jersey State Council

Dear Mr. Eckstein:

This letter is in follow-up to our discussions of June 21 and 22, 1993 at the first Dredged Materials Forum. We believe that the two days we spent together were a good start to solving the difficult problems surrounding dredging and dredged material disposal needed to maintain the Port of New York and New Jersey. We thank all of you who participated for the level of energy, candor and professionalism that you brought to the Forum.

At the Forum, we explored the problems posed by contaminated sediment dredging and disposal, listed suggested potential alternatives to Mud Dump Site disposal and worked out a framework to facilitate detailed discussions of specific areas of concern in dealing with contaminated sediments.

The group identified four major areas of concern: "Port dredging and disposal"; "Need for disposal criteria"; "Point and non-point source control"; and "Remediation of the Superfund sites and other sources".

There was a consensus that two of the areas, "Point and non-point source control" and "Remediation of the Superfund site and other sources", will be dealt with outside of the Dredged Materials Forum. The Harbor Estuary program has taken on the issue of source control in the Harbor area and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has taken the lead on Superfund sites, and will provide for public involvement.

There was also consensus that "Port dredging and disposal" and the "need for disposal criteria" would be separated into categories and workgroups would be established to focus on each category. It was agreed that EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will be the lead coordinating agencies to establish the workgroups and to ensure timely transfer of information between the workgroups. The seven work groups agreed upon were the following:

- o **Dredging, Transport and Disposal** -- This workgroup will explore the need for dredging, and review techniques to improve the dredging, transport, and dump site disposal process. For instance, there is technology which allows for less dispersive dredging operations. This group would not include any new siting discussions.
- o **Decontamination Technology** -- This workgroup will explore the possibilities for decontamination technologies, but would not get involved in siting issues. This group will, as a first priority, provide guidance to EPA relating to expending the \$2.7 million given to EPA by Congress to demonstrate decontamination technologies.
- o **Containment Technologies (ocean and upland)** -- This group will work on the siting and development of contaminated sediment containment options, including subaqueous borrow pits, containment islands and upland disposal sites. The first task for this work group is to develop the process for a subaqueous borrow pit pilot project for the disposal of contaminated dredged materials. The group will build upon the Environmental Impact Statement work done in the past by the USACE and EPA to facilitate the early implementation of this alternative.
- o **Siting of Decontamination Facility** -- This group will work to identify potential sites for pilot decontamination facility(s).
- o **Need for Disposal Criteria** -- This group will identify gaps in existing marine and upland disposal criteria and work to develop a process to fill these gaps. Full sharing of all scientific information with clarification of assumptions would be included in the effort.
- o **Mud Dump Site Closure** -- This group will pursue the development of a closure plan and monitoring plan for the Mud Dump site.
- o **New Ocean Disposal Site** -- This group will participate in the soon to be initiated EIS and help develop a process for siting a new ocean disposal site for category one (suitable for unrestricted ocean disposal) sediments.

In the closing session it was requested that the EPA and the USACE meet to discuss coordination and leadership responsibilities and to begin the workgroup formation as soon as possible. EPA and USACE met on Friday, June 25, 1993. We are requesting that you advise us of your desire to join or advise us of others who have an interest in joining any of the various workgroups. As was discussed at the Forum, we suggest that individuals limit the number of workgroups on which they will participate. Remembering that significant commitments of time will likely be involved, and that workgroups will likely have conflicts in meeting schedules, we suggest that individuals pool their resources wherever possible with others whose views will closely represent their own.


In order to facilitate the timely formation and operation of the groups we have named interim chairs. The interim chair will be responsible for conducting the first meeting of the workgroup and facilitating establishment of its structure, charge and operating procedures. Each workgroup will be free to select a chair at its first meeting.

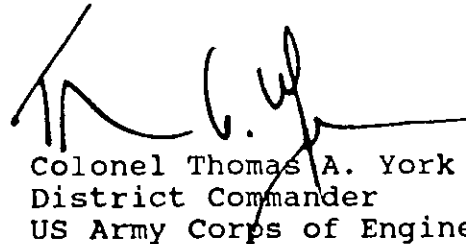
<u>Workgroup</u>	<u>Interim Chairperson</u>
o Dredging, Transport & Disposal	Carol Ash Port Authority NY/NJ Telephone:
o Decontamination Technologies	Joseph Vietri US Army Corps of Engineers Telephone:
o Containment Technologies	Richard Sinding NJ Department of Environmental Protection and Energy Telephone:
o Site of Decontamination Facility	Roberta Weisbrod New State Department of Environmental Conservation Telephone:
o Need for Disposal Criteria	Mario Del Vicario US Environmental Protection Agency Telephone:
o New Ocean Disposal Site	Robert Hargrove US Environmental Protection Agency Telephone:
o Mud Dump Site Closure	James Tripp Environmental Defense Fund Telephone:

Please notify Doris Campbell, Executive Assistant to the District Engineer, or Major Bob Stroxtile, Deputy Commander for Civil Works regarding the workgroup(s) you are interested in by July 10, 1993. The interim chairperson will be responsible for scheduling a meeting at a date no later than July 30, 1993. EPA and USACE intend to be present at each meeting and will provide facilitation for at least these first meetings. Workgroups will, by August 9, 1993, share with all participants a rough draft of a list of activities to be accomplished as well as projected completion dates leading to resolution of the concern with which they are involved.

We are also scheduling August 17 as the tentative date of Dredge Materials Forum II. Details will be provided in the future. In closing I would once again like to thank you for your active participation at the Forum. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact either of us or respectively.

Sincerely Yours,


William J. Muszynski, P.E.
Acting Regional Administrator


Colonel Thomas A. York
District Commander
US Army Corps of Engineer

cc: Commissioner Thomas C. Jorling, NYSDEC
Commissioner Scott A. Weiner, NJDEP&E