



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NORTHERN DIVISION
NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND
10 INDUSTRIAL HIGHWAY
MAIL STOP, #82
LESTER, PA 19113-2090

5090
Ser 2533/1823/JMC

IN REPLY REFER TO

JUN 19 1995

Ms. Nancy Beardsley
Maine Department of Environmental Protection
State House Station 17
Augusta, ME 04333-0017

Subj: FEASIBILITY STUDY (FS) REPORT, PORTSMOUTH NAVAL SHIPYARD,
KITTERY, ME

Dear Ms. Beardsley:

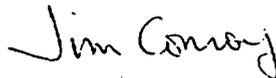
We appreciate the specific comments, concerns and recommendations on the FS Report which we received in your May 25th letter. We believe the Navy could not have made the progress on the RCRA Corrective Action Program at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard without the teamwork developed with the Environmental Protection Agency, Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the Technical Review Committee. As funding tightens for the environmental restoration program the need for close communication, cooperation and teamwork will only increase. This teamwork is also needed as the cleanup program at Portsmouth goes through a double transition; from RCRA to CERCLA and from the Technical Review Committee to the Restoration Advisory Board.

We see your letter as an indication that we need to work even closer together to get through these transitions and redevelop the teamwork approach necessary for an effective and efficient cleanup program. The Navy and our consultant, Halliburton NUS, is reviewing your comments on the Feasibility Study Report and we will address each of your concerns in the near future. However, some comments in your letter must be addressed immediately. These are discussed in the enclosed responses.

We believe we need to re-evaluate how we can best ensure an integrated approach to the environmental restoration program at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and address the concerns of all parties. In order to communicate more effectively we suggest that we increase the frequency of our "project management" meetings to at least monthly or more often until we get through this transition period. An option which has proven beneficial at other Navy installations is to undertake a formal partnering effort between the EPA, MEDEP and Navy project managers.

Please call me with any suggestions, comments or questions on this letter or the enclosed comments; (610) 595-0567 extension 117.

Sincerely,



JAMES M. CONROY, PE
LT, CEC, USN
Remedial Project Manager
By direction of the
Commanding Officer

Encl: On-Shore Feasibility Study Report Response to Comments
(Partial)

cc w/enclosure:

EPA (M. Cassidy)

PNS (Code 121.10, F. Endyke)

NOAA (K. Finkelstein)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (K. Munney)

Maine Department of Marine Resources (D. Card)

Ms. Juanita Bell

Mr. Doug Bogen

Mr. Jeff Clifford

Ms. Michele Dionne

Ms. Eileen Foley

Mr. Phil McCarthy

Mr. Jack McKenna

Mr. John Nelson

Mr. Guy Petty

Mr. Onil Roy

Ms. Cathy Wolff

PNS (Code 121, 100PAO)

Halliburton NUS (L. Klink)

Halliburton NUS (B. Horne)

COMSUBGRUTWO (R. Jones)

**RESPONSE TO MEDEP MAY 25th COMMENTS
ON
ONSHORE FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT
(PARTIAL)**

1. We were all (Navy, EPA, MEDEP) aware of the need for additional information regarding the fate and transport of chemicals from the DRMO and JILF via potential groundwater migration to the Piscataqua River as we began the FS Report. However, in an effort to move forward we are proposing in the FS to address the source of contamination either through removal (DRMO) or capping (JILF). These actions will certainly mitigate the possible migration of contaminants. But because the possibility of continued migration could still exist, we propose continued monitoring following these remedial actions. Action levels and contingency remedial actions would be established in the Record of Decision. This would build the groundwork for remedial action to occur sooner, rather than waiting for further studies. It would also establish the responses necessary if the remedial actions did not completely address the issue of groundwater migration.

As you are aware, several years ago a team of investigators was assembled by the Navy to continue the offshore investigation. This action was necessary because existing sampling and analytical techniques were still being developed by the scientific community. Because of this, the offshore investigation has lagged behind the onshore investigation which relies on well established techniques. For this reason the onshore feasibility study was developed to address the actions necessary to remediate onshore concerns and mitigate the offshore migration of contaminants. However, we will update the Onshore FS Report to incorporate the findings of the Offshore Ecological Risk Assessment. An offshore feasibility study will be developed separately to address the impacts of contaminants which may have already migrated from the Shipyard.

2. Your comments on our phased investigation of seeps at the JILF lead us to believe that you think we are withholding information on the seeps from you and the EPA. These seeps have been sampled three times. The first sampling was conducted by McLaren/Hart and reported in the RFI Report, dated July 1992. The second round of sampling and analysis was conducted in the spring of 1993 with the results presented in a report dated November 22, 1993. The third round of sampling and analysis was conducted in the fall of 1993 and will be presented in the Ecological Risk Assessment Report. We share your frustration that this information is taking a long time to develop and present. These delays are partially due to the development of sampling, analysis and evaluation techniques which are at the leading edge of technology for use in the off-shore studies.

3. Remedial Objectives: The FS Report relies heavily on the stringent Media Protection Standards (MPSS) which were developed under the RCRA Corrective Action Program. Under the RCRA the MPSS were developed, submitted and reviewed separate from the Feasibility Study Report. Under CERCLA the "cleanup standards" would have been developed through a less rigorous approach and one without strict separate public participation requirements such as the public hearings conducted by the EPA for the MPSS. Because of this the MPSS are the chemicals of concern and not discussed as thoroughly in the FS Report as they would have been if developed under the CERCLA approach. The media and exposure pathways are addressed specifically in Section 3.3. Perhaps the Draft FS Report needs to be clearer on how each remedial alternative addresses the objectives and this can be addressed as we respond to your individual comments.

4. Media Protection Standards: Our presentation of MPS exceedances are based upon the very definition of the exposure scenarios required by EPA risk assessment guidance for groundwater and surface soils. We agree that it will be useful to consider test boring results from 0 to 2 feet for the purpose of showing problem areas and will modify the FS Report to do so.

Your reason for commenting on no PAH analyses for samples taken near the mercury burial vaults (SWMU #9) during the RCRA Facilities Investigation (RFI) is unclear. The RFI workplan objectives for soil investigations at SWMU #9 were to determine whether mercury contaminated waste had escaped from the vaults and not for PAHs which would most likely be present because of the location within the JILF.

5. We appreciate the specific comments in your letter and request that in future comment letters you number your comments. It will save us time and effort in responding to your comments, tracking agreement or disagreement with our responses and incorporating the final consensus into a report if your comments are numbered and readily referenced to the section of the report being commented on.