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NCBC GULFPORT
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LETTER REGARDING EFFORTS TO DEVELOP A STRONG RESTORATION ADVISORY
BOARD WITH COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT NCBC GULFPORT MS
10/25/1994
GULF COAST TENANTS ORGANIZATION

Gulf Coast Tenants Organization

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39501-GENERAL
13.01.00.0028

Ms. Elsie Munsell
Deputy Assistant
Secretary of the Navy
Pentagon
Washington, D.C.

Dear Elsie Munsell:

This letter intends to make you aware of the efforts to develop a strong RAB with genuine community involvement at the Navy Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport, Mississippi.

Our lead organizer there is a young man Donnell Magee. Along with the most prominent pastor in the base community, Rev. Lee J. Adams, James Boyd, president of the West Gulfport Civic Club, other organizations and leaders are supporting the RAB development as part of an ambitious cleanup program. The West Gulfport Environmental Task Force, a coalition of groups has been organized to represent community interests.

Contamination migrating off the base via surface water and ground water. Base restoration documents don't reflect the migration, but in many places the contamination is visible. Navy personnel don't deny the migration.

The base is surrounded on all sides by residences, the majority of which are poor white and African-Americans. There are a lot of children in two housing projects who play in the soil and water. There is a high number of children who are lead leaded in one housing project. Lead is one of the major contaminants.

There is sparse communications between community members and base officials. The response community leaders get back to requests for independent testing by community selected toxicologists and cleanup now is there is no money available. After months of community requests, base officials finally gave a quick tour.

I have enclosed a letter from the West Gulfport Environmental Task Force that outlines the community requests for inclusion on the RAB. They don't ask for inclusion on the selection committee, but maybe you can see that this happens. Hopefully your involvement will let base officials know that these African-Americans are not isolated.

Thanks for your help. We know that you are very busy now with all these RABs developing. We wish you good luck in your endeavors. Call upon us here when we can help.

Sincerely yours,

Pat Bryant
Executive Director

October 25, 1994

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