Message

From: Ryan, Emily M [RyanE@gao.gov]
Sent: 9/30/2015 5:34:38 PM
To: Mugdan, Walter [Mugdan.Walter@epa.gov]
CC: DeHart, Nicole [DeHart.Nicole@epa.gov]; Carroll, Gregory P [CarrollG@gao.gov]; Frisch, Janet E [FrischJ@gao.gov]
Subject: RE: GAO Study of Superfund Sediment Sites - Region 2 Site Visit

Hi Walter,
Thanks for sharing the information about the Vietnamese delegation—sounds very interesting and relevant. However, we are generally not able to conduct site visits on weekends or federal holidays, and I see that October 11 is on a Sunday and Monday, October 12 is a federal holiday. We understand the time and effort that is needed to plan two site visits at once, so please let us know if there is anything we can do to better facilitate a site visit on the 20th-22nd. Please feel free to give me (202-512-8554) or Greg Carroll (202-512-3720) a call if you have additional questions or concerns.
Sincerely,
Emily

From: Mugdan, Walter [mailto:Mugdan.Walter@epa.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2015 11:56 AM
To: Ryan, Emily M
Cc: DeHart, Nicole; Carroll, Gregory P; Frisch, Janet E
Subject: RE: GAO Study of Superfund Sediment Sites - Region 2 Site Visit

Dear Emily,

Thanks for your note. I am sure we will be able to accommodate your schedule and your suggested visits and meetings. It will probably take us a few days to work with the various team members before we can get back to you with final confirmation. We'll be back to you shortly.

By coincidence, a delegation from Vietnam is scheduled to visit the Diamond Alkali Superfund site on October 11. As you know, the Passaic River is an Operable Unit of that site, which is situated on the bank of the river in Newark, New Jersey. The former Diamond Alkali factory made Agent Orange during the Vietnam War era, and was the source of much of the dioxin in the river. We are wondering whether you might be interested to join this site tour that is already in the planning stages? We would, of course, have additional staff to work with you and answer your questions, beyond the staff who will be working with the Vietnamese delegation. Nevertheless, there would be a logistical benefit to combining these visits, because of the coordination and personnel needed.

Walter

From: Ryan, Emily M [mailto:RyanE@gao.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2015 9:51 AM
To: Mugdan, Walter
Cc: DeHart, Nicole; Carroll, Gregory P; Frisch, Janet E
Subject: GAO Study of Superfund Sediment Sites - Region 2 Site Visit

Dear Walter,
Thank you again to you and your colleagues for meeting with us recently to discuss the Region's approach to Superfund sediment sites. We found the discussion to be very informative. As discussed during the call, we would like to conduct a site visit at two sediment sites in the Region, and have determined that the Lower Passaic and Gowanus Canal sites would best fit our methodology for this study. We would like to hold this visit from October 20-October 22 (mid-day), and hope that these dates also work for the Region.

During this visit, we would like to hold the following meetings:

- Meeting with Regional Leadership to discuss both sites (would be nice to have as a "kick-off" meeting on 20th, if leadership is available)

- Meeting with Lower Passaic RPM

- Meeting with Lower Passaic Cooperating Parties Group representative

- Meeting with Lower Passaic community involvement coordinator

- Meeting with Gowanus Canal RPM

- Meeting with Gowanus Canal PRP group representative

- Meeting with Gowanus Canal community involvement coordinator

We would also like to have a tour of both sites, though we recognize that there might not be much to "see". However, we think it would be helpful for us to view a section or sections of the sites to understand the rationale behind some of the remedy selection decisions and challenges EPA faces in managing these sites. We would be happy to help in the development of a schedule for a site visit to the extent that the Region would like our assistance, such as by scheduling the meetings with the PRP groups and community involvement coordinator. If the Region would prefer for us to schedule some of these meetings, we would appreciate you sending us the relevant contact information for these parties. If time permits, we would like to schedule about 90 minutes for each of the above meetings.

In light of our interest in the Lower Passaic and Gowanus Canal sites, at this time we would also like to request some documents related to these sites:

- For both sites we would like copies of the "Consideration Memos" submitted to the CSTAG on how the sites have addressed the 11 Principles for Managing Contaminated Sediment Risks.

- For the Lower Passaic site, we would like a copy of any comments the Region has received on the Proposed Plan from OSRTI. In addition, we have a copy of the comments on the Proposed Plan from NRRB and CSTAG dated April 11, 2014, and the Region's response to this memo also dated April 11, 2014, but if there have been additional communications between these groups and the Region we would also like to request those documents.

- For the Gowanus Canal, we would also like to request a copy of any comments the Region received on the 2012 Proposed Plan from OSRTI. In addition, we have a copy of the comments on the Proposed Plan from NRRB and CSTAG dated November 28, 2012, and the Region's response to this memo dated December 28, 2012, but if there had been any additional communications between these groups and the Region we would also like to request those documents.

If you think there are any other documents you think we should review for these two sites in advance of our visit, related to how the Region implemented EPA's policies, procedures, and guidance for sites, and how EPA entities have coordinated their review of the remedy selection for these sites, we would be happy to receive them, or web links to them.

We thank you and your staff in advance for your assistance with this request. If it would be helpful to schedule a quick meeting to discuss the site visit, I'd be happy to arrange something this week. Please let me know if you have any other questions.
Sincerely,
Emily

Emily M. Ryan

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