Message

From: Anderson, RobinM [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=77F1A647B05C440D9D752D1EA01E8188-ANDERSON, ROBINM]
Sent: 2/1/2021 7:10:10 PM
To: Fonseca, Silvina [Fonseca.Silvina@epa.gov]
Subject: FW: Press inquiry- Knoxville News Sentinel

From: Simes, Benjamin <Simes.Benjamin@epa.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 1, 2021 2:08 PM
To: Ammon, Doug <Ammon.Doug@epa.gov>; Anderson, RobinM <Anderson.RobinM@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: Press inquiry- Knoxville News Sentinel

Doug and Robin,

We got this request from a reporter last Friday.

Thanks,

Benjamin Simes, CHMM
US EPA, OLEM
Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office
202-564-0527 D
571-302-6189 C
202-564-0771 F

From: Young, Dianna <Young.Dianna@epa.gov>
Sent: Monday, February 1, 2021 9:10 AM
To: Gervais, Gregory <Gervais.Gregory@epa.gov>; Hockey, David <Hockey.David@epa.gov>; Branby, Jill <Branby.Jill@epa.gov>
Cc: Simes, Benjamin <Simes.Benjamin@epa.gov>; Cornelious, Anna <Cornelious.Anna@epa.gov>; Tso, Jonathan <Tso.Jonathan@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: Press inquiry- Knoxville News Sentinel

All,

This seems like is may be strictly a OW response but they're running it by us because it's a FF. I'm copying Ben (DOE) and Anna/Jon (R4) for your awareness.

I did not received an attachment of the document referenced but we can ask for it.

Thanks
Dianna

From: Taylor, Trish <Taylor.Trish@epa.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 29, 2021 2:43 PM
To: Labbe, Ken <Labbe.Ken@epa.gov>; Colip, Matthew <colip.matthew@epa.gov>; Benjamin, Kent <Benjamin.Kent@epa.gov>; Manges, Ellen <Manges.Ellen@epa.gov>; OLEM OSRTI Press <OLEM-OSRTI-Press@epa.gov>
Cc: Young, Dianna <Young.Dianna@epa.gov>; Royal, Emily <Royal.Emily@epa.gov>; Lapachin, Jyl

<Lapachin.Jyl@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Press inquiry- Knoxville News Sentinel

Thanks Ken,
Adding FFRRO to the loop, too.

From: Labbe, Ken <Labbe.Ken@epa.gov>
Sent: Friday, January 29, 2021 2:40 PM
To: Colip, Matthew <colip.matthew@epa.gov>; Taylor, Trish <Taylor.Trish@epa.gov>; Benjamin, Kent <Benjamin.Kent@epa.gov>; Manges, Ellen <Manges.Ellen@epa.gov>; OLEM OSRTI Press <OLEM-OSRTI-Press@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: Press inquiry- Knoxville News Sentinel

Hi all,

Just wanted to see if you think OLEM has any equities here. Please advise. Another press officer is running it by another program as well (OW).

Thanks,

Ken

From: Gabrielle, Vincent <Vincent.Gabrielle@knoxnews.com>
Sent: Friday, January 29, 2021 1:07 PM
To: Press <Press@epa.gov>
Subject: Press inquiry- Knoxville News Sentinel

Hello EPA Press Office,

I have some questions about a decision made by former EPA head Wheeler in the waning hours of 2020.

If my reading of the attached document is correct, Wheeler decided that the EPA has authority over radionucleotide pollution released into the local waterways by old atomic contamination under CERCLA. However, in subsequent parts of the document Wheeler left open the ability of DOE to set the standard for how clean the site should be using site specific criteria regardless of Clean Water Act provisions or local Tennessee river designations. In addition he found that anti-degradation standards of our state don't apply and in footnote 42 suggests that the DOE can adjust how polluted the rivers around the site become based on whether they choose to redesignate land use in the site as something else.

This reads to me like Wheeler has asserted EPA primacy over CERCLA matters in the Oak Ridge Reserve superfund site but left open the door for the polluter on site, the Department of Energy, to set the baseline for how the cleanup effort is judged and where it is judged effectively cutting out state regulators.

My questions are as follows.

1) With the new administration does this decision still stand?
2) If so is my interpretation of this decision correct?
3) If it isn't please explain why Wheeler's decision is not license for the DOE to define the terms of the cleanup.

Thanks!

Vincent

Vincent Damian Gabrielle

Science, Technology and Culture Reporter

Pronouns: He/him

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Twitter: @vincentdgabriel

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