To: Whitley, Christopher[Whitley.Christopher@epa.gov]; Thomas, Hattie[Thomas.Hattie@epa.gov]; Hague, Mark[Hague.Mark@epa.gov]
From: Brooks, Karl
Sent: Fri 2/14/2014 5:55:39 PM
Subject: Re: Op ed

Earliest possible date is fine. Good work slimming it. Contact PD. Tx

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From: Whitley, Christopher
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2014 9:17:51 AM
To: Brooks, Karl
Subject: RE: Op ed

Karl,

Email is running a bit wonky today....

The maximum word count allowed by the P-D for guest op-eds is 700.

This most recent version of the revised draft (included as text below) contains 546 words. Editorial boards almost always prefer shorter submissions over longer ones. My unsolicited recommendation is that we keep it short to avoid zealous editing that could possibly alter our intended messages.

They will also want a mugshot of you, which of course we can provide.

As for placement, we can request that the board consider running the piece on a specific day, or within a range of days, but obviously they get to make that decision. The farther in advance of our targeted date for publication that we submit the piece, the better our chances.

I will gladly contact the P-D to deliver our final draft and inquire about a preferred publication date, or will provide that contact information to you if you prefer to reach out to them directly. Just let me know.

Thanks,

Chris Whitley
Public Affairs Specialist
U.S. EPA Region 7 Office of Public Affairs
11201 Renner Boulevard
Lenexa, KS 66219
913-551-7394

CURRENT REVISED DRAFT:

Worries, impatience, and questions surround the West Lake Landfill Superfund Site in Bridgeton, Mo. Good people want assurance and action. They expect answers from EPA.

While EPA cannot promise swift action, this fact remains true:

Scientific evidence shows no one living or working around West Lake is experiencing harmful exposures to its hazardous contaminants, including the radiologically-contaminated materials, because EPA has securely contained them.

EPA, working with our federal, state and local partners, has ordered the responsible parties to fund and maintain controls to keep those contaminants from threatening people's health.

This Superfund site's history certainly fuels frustrations with a legal process that, from outside the fence looking in, seems to move too slowly. This agency strives to meet impatience with clear, accurate facts about the site, its conditions, and EPA's duty to select a feasible long-term solution to deal with real risk not exaggerated arguments.

Every day, EPA and its partners are moving ahead to choose and implement a final remedy for the site. And while we complete the necessary scientific work for a final remedy, we will keep the public's health protected.

EPA listens. The community told EPA to consider removing the contaminants from West Lake altogether instead of securing them in place with a cap.

EPA responds. Our 2008 cap decision was scrutinized by the community who wanted us to relook at our selected remedy. We ordered the responsible parties to fully evaluate options requested by the community. In addition, headquarters scientists and engineers recommended gathering more and newer scientific data.

EPA has gathered new data on groundwater, air quality and radiation emissions to develop the most accurate picture of present site conditions. When this reevaluation is done, EPA will again weigh the options and recommend a secure and feasible remedy for public review and comment.

Along this methodical path, EPA and its partners have kept focused on smoldering beneath the adjacent Bridgeton Sanitary Landfill, and acted to keep them from impacting West Lake. The State of Missouri has taken the lead by requiring Republic Services to control odors coming from the Bridgeton Landfill and to successfully stabilize the subsurface smoldering.

Design began last October and now nears completion under EPA oversight of a protective isolation barrier to separate Bridgeton and West Lake. Construction should begin soon, will take time, but will be done under EPA authority.

Some frustrated neighbors, as well as the editorial board of the Post-Dispatch, have called for the West Lake Site to be transferred to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for handling under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program. FUSRAP, as it is called, has cleaned up several smaller radiologically-contaminated sites in the metro area, so why not West Lake?

The fact is that EPA cannot simply "hand off" West Lake to the Corps. That would require Congressional action. Even under FUSRAP, any Corps site cleanup would have to follow the same Superfund rules that EPA is following now.

A final remedy for the challenges posed by the West Lake Landfill Site takes time. EPA appreciates well-informed community demands for action, and we will work as promptly as possible to strike the the Superfund law's duty to balance through science and responsible action.

Karl Brooks is Regional Administrator for EPA Region 7, headquartered in Lenexa, Kan.

-----Original Message-----
From: Brooks, Karl
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2014 4:16 AM
To: Whitley, Christopher
Subject: Op ed

Word count? Post limit/pref? If over send me version edited to exceed limit by 5%.

Tx! We will get this done. Might call eds to arrange placement.