



May 15, 2008

Ms. Susan Svirsky
Rest of the River Project Manager
United States Environmental Protection Agency
C/O Weston Solutions
10 Lyman Street
Pittsfield MA 01201

RE: EPA-GE Housatonic River Site, Corrective Measures Study Public Comments

Dear Ms. Svirsky:

This letter addresses the pending EPA review of General Electric's (GE's) Corrective Measures Study on the clean up of PCB's from downstream portions of the Housatonic River (the "Rest of the River" Investigation).

The Taconic Chapter of Trout Unlimited represents over 160 members in the Housatonic River area who are dedicated to the protection of coldwater fisheries. We appreciate the opportunity to provide our input before the EPA develops and proposes its Preferred Alternative (s) from GE's recommendations.

Our Chapter has discussed the Rest of the River issue at length and has assessed all of the applicable technologies and cleanup alternatives proposed.

Our conclusion is that, without the necessary expertise to evaluate treatment and disposal alternatives, our input would be largely "second guessing" the experts without adding much value. We believe our role is better served by simply advocating for the outcome all of our members support: The preservation and protection of the Housatonic River as a world-class fishery.

We are concerned that applicable evaluation criteria do not provide sufficient attention to existence of the river as a destination for sportsmen and women. The published assessment criteria are strongly objective in coverage without due consideration given to all-important subjective factors like the beauty and enjoyment of the river itself. In this, the Rest of the River differs dramatically from what has been remediated to date.

Certainly, any focus on the downstream portion of the Housatonic as a sports destination in itself requires a delicate balance with risks to human health and the environment. However, certain alternatives which raise water temperatures, advocate channelization or negatively impact the river's benthic zone environment will have a devastating impact on the fishery.

Residents and tourists alike have enjoyed the two designated Housatonic River "catch and release" areas in Lee and Glendale for years. Contrary to those who voiced strong opposition to the designations, the areas have proven an unparalleled success. The presence or absence of PCB's is simply not a factor in the joy of a day or evening sport fishing the river. However, like Woods' Pond, they are seriously at risk today.

Our request is simple. Please do not destroy the river in the effort to save it.

Sincerely yours,

Gene Chague, Chairman
Board of Directors
Taconic Chapter of Trout Unlimited

65 East St.
Lenox, MA 01240

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