

From: Svirsky.Susan@epamail.epa.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 27, 2007 9:22 AM
To: Campbell, Scott (MNH)
Cc: Palmieri, Linda
Subject: Fw: my public comments
Please file

-----Forwarded by Susan Svirsky/R1/USEPA/US on 03/27/2007 09:21AM -----

To: Susan Svirsky/R1/USEPA/US@EPA
From: susan antil <sea01238@yahoo.com>
Date: 03/26/2007 07:05PM
Subject: my public comments

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a high school earth science teacher, who recently guided over 100 students on a 3-year research project on the Housatonic River. During this time, it became evident to me how much my students and I care about the river. Many of my students participate in recreation on the river or nearby. Our outdoor club canoes the river, and kayaks from East New Lenox Road to Woods Pond. Many, including myself, fish the river and mountain bike the dirt roads along the river. Students who have never been out on the river are amazed at how beautiful the river can be. In learning about the toxic nature of sediments in the river we were all saddened at how the value of this amazing resource is compromised.

As a resort community, the Berkshires would certainly be enhanced with a more extensive clean-up of the river down stream from Pittsfield. The areas behind the dams and other hot spots should be addressed. Making the river safe for swimming, more active sport fishing, and the protection of upper level consumers like mink, birds of prey and ducks, should be a priority. With the health controversy of PCB's still heating up further, it's obvious to us that if you make a mess, you have the responsibility to clean it up. No company should be allowed to pollute on such a great scale and not be held accountable for a thorough clean-up.

Cleaning up the river in down town Pittsfield is a good start, but that's all it is-a start. Accepting a poisoned, dangerous river that once was a natural marvel, is unacceptable. Some of the best brown trout fishing in the East is in Cornwall, Ct. on the Housatonic River. Eating this fish is a risk. Recreation areas such as Kettletown State Park on Lake Zoar, should also be available for use without risk. With the long term planning of a bicycle trail running from North Adams through Pittsfield and ultimately through Lenox and Lee, the breathing-in of PCB ridden dust from the river sediment (especially if the trail runs close to Woods Pond in Lenox) poses a health risk to an even greater number of people. If the river is not cleaned up thoroughly, there will be consequences in the future that we cannot yet imagine.

Don't stop at Pittsfield. Clean up the river so that it can be enjoyed by all. Not to do so not only is irresponsible, but deeply unethical.

Sincerely,
Stephen Antil
Science Department Chair, ST. Joseph Central High School, Pittsfield, MA.

The fish are biting.

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