

United States Environmental Protection Agency
EPA New England
One Congress Street, Suite 1100
Boston, MA 02114-2023

October 8, 2008

Mr. Kevin Mooney
GE Corporate Environmental Programs
159 Plastics Avenue
Pittsfield, MA 01201

RE: 2008 Summer Inspection Reports
1 ½ Mile Reach Removal Action
GE-Pittsfield/Housatonic River Site, Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Mooney:

EPA has reviewed GE's August 21, 2008 *Summer 2008 Re-Vegetation Monitoring Report*, prepared by AMEC Earth and Environmental, Inc. and GE's August 29, 2008 *Report on 2008 Inspection of Riverbank Soil Restoration, Riprap, Aquatic Habitat Enhancement Structures and Ancillary Items*. Pursuant to the May 2008 *Interim Post-Removal Site Control Plan*, both of these reports are subject to EPA approval. These reports are subject to the terms and conditions specified in the Consent Decree (CD) that was entered in U.S. District Court on October 27, 2000.

Pursuant to Paragraph 73 of the CD, EPA, after consultation with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, approves the above-referenced reports subject to the following conditions:

Conditions Related to the Summer 2008 Re-Vegetation Monitoring Report

1. Page 4: The last sentence states as follows: "In addition, based on discussions between GE and EPA, GE is required to monitor the plantings along the top of the riverbank at Parcel I9-4-14 and I9-4-19 in Phase 1 (see Figure 2)." These plantings are not part of the upland, non-riverbank plantings. The above-mentioned plantings are part of riverbank plantings and, therefore, are part of the riverbank meander inspections. GE shall correct this sentence in all future reports.
2. Page 5, 4th paragraph. Same issue as Comment 1 above. In all future reports, GE shall state that the referenced plantings on Parcels I9-4-14 and I9-4-19 are riverbank plantings subject to the meander inspections.
3. Page 6. In all future reports if GE adds additional invasive plant species to Appendix A of the *Interim Post-Removal Site Control Plan*, GE shall note that these species are not on the official state invasive species list, but that GE determined it was prudent and appropriate to control these species.

4. Page 11 (Section 3.1.2) and Conclusions. GE shall replant the two sugar maples on Parcel 18-24-1 prior to the end of this fall planting season, that is, prior to November 15, 2008. GE shall attach tree tags to the two replanted sugar maples that identify the date of replanting to facilitate the future re-inspection of the trees for the next two years. In addition, EPA noted during the inspection that there were two stressed oaks on Parcel I8-24-1. GE shall attach tree tags to these two trees and also inspect them for the next two years. If any of these four trees do not survive in the next two years, then GE shall replace the trees and monitor the trees for another two years after replanting.
5. Page 15. The report notes that a moderate amount of Oriental Bittersweet was observed at Parcel I7-1-101. However, there is no corresponding action item in the conclusion section. Oriental Bittersweet is an invasive species listed in Appendix A of the *Interim Post-Removal Site Control Plan*. GE shall include this Oriental Bittersweet in its invasive treatment control program.
6. Pages 17 and 18, Conclusions. GE identified several cage maintenance and invasive species control activities that need to be performed. Note that GE is required to perform these activities based on observations made and that subsequent EPA approval is not required prior to GE performing the required activities.
7. Table 1. Note that the third plot in the Dawes to Pomeroy stretch, west bank, should be designated as 3-W-3, not 3-W-2. GE shall correct this in all future reports.
8. Figure 3. The locations of monitoring plots 2-W-3 and 2-E-3 are not shown. GE shall correct this in all future reports.

Conditions Related to the Report on 2008 Inspection of Riverbank Soil Restoration, Riprap, Aquatic Habitat Enhancement Structures and Ancillary Items.

1. Page 2, 2nd full paragraph. Note that the purpose of this inspection and associated report was not to evaluate the herbaceous or woody cover along the riverbanks. This was addressed in GE's *Summer 2008 Re-Vegetation Monitoring Report*. GE shall correct this statement in all future reports.
2. Page 2, Area 1 and Page 5, Future Activities. The placement of hay bales is a temporary measure, not a permanent solution. Therefore, GE shall not install hay bales. Rather, GE shall place sufficient riprap in the eroded area to prevent future erosion.
3. Page 2, Area 2. Note that the Parcel ID in the text (I7-20-2) is inconsistent with the Parcel ID shown in Figure 3 (I7-20-1). The Parcel ID shown in Figure 3 is the correct ID.

4. Page 2, Area 3. EPA's notes do not match GE's description of "Area 3" in this Report. There are three issues associated with Area 3 that need further monitoring and/or corrective actions. These three issues are described immediately below. The corrective measures report (described below) shall include a revised description of Area 3, complete with revised tables (e.g., Table 1), figures (e.g., Figures 2 and 5) and re-labeled photos. EPA recommends that "Area 3" be divided into separate areas and re-numbered, based on the conditions and issues involved.
 - a. There is exposed Geoweb at Parcels I8-23-6, I8-23-4, I8-23-2/3, and I8-23-1. Although GE does not need to perform corrective action now, GE shall continue to monitor the exposed Geoweb. Photograph 5 of Appendix B shows exposed Geoweb on Parcel I8-23-2/3, not Parcel I8-23-4, and Photographs 7 and 8 of Appendix B show exposed Geoweb located on Parcel I8-23-6 and not on parcels downstream of Pomeroy Avenue.
 - b. Erosion adjacent to a swale on Parcel I8-23-2/3 that is likely caused by storm water generated by a recently installed drainage pipe associated with the recently renovated parking lot. The erosion, which resulted in exposed Geoweb, is adjacent to a drainage swale constructed prior to renovation of the parking lot. Therefore, to prevent continued erosion, GE shall place additional riprap in the area. This area is shown in Photograph 6 of Appendix B. Note that the Parcel ID I8-23-4 given in Appendix B for this Photograph is incorrect.
 - c. Eroded soil and exposed Geoweb at the top of riprap on Parcel I6-1-68 at the approximate property line with Parcel I6-1-68 and I6-1-67. See the attached photographs. In order to stabilize the area of the eroded riverbank and prevent continued erosion, GE shall plant 2 red-osier dogwoods within the eroded area or place additional riprap.
5. Page 3, 1st paragraph under Riprap and ACB Monitoring. Note that due to elevated river flows at the time of the inspection, it was not possible to inspect the shotcrete at the transition between the ACB and the adjacent riprap at the downstream of the ACB. GE shall ensure that these areas are inspected in 2009.
6. Page 5, Future Activities. GE shall coordinate the cleaning of the backflow preventers at Fred Garner Park with the City of Pittsfield in preparation for City assuming this responsibility.
7. Attachment C. Aquatic Habitat Enhancement Structures Photographic Log. In future reports, GE shall indicate the stretches of river where the enhancement structures are located. An example of such indication would be "Between the Lyman and Elm Street bridges."

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GE shall provide electronic versions of all subsequent reports and submittals.

GE shall perform the corrective actions/measures specified in both reports and in this letter within 30 days of the date of this letter. GE shall submit for approval a report describing the corrective actions/measures taken and any required follow-up measures within 60 days of the date of this letter.

EPA reserves the right to perform additional sampling and/or require additional response actions, if necessary, to meet the requirements of the Consent Decree.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (413) 236-0969.

Sincerely,



Dean Tagliaferro
EPA Project Manager

Attached Photographs

cc: A. Silfer, GE
M. Carroll, GE
R. McLaren, GE (w/o enclosure)
J. Bieke, Counsel for GE
S. Steenstrup, MA DEP
M. Gorski, MA DEP
S. Peterson, CT DEP
D. Young, MA EEOEA
K. Munney, US F&W
R. Nasman, Berkshire Gas
J. Kilborn, EPA
T. Conway, EPA
H. Inglis, EPA
C. Ferry, ASRC
Public Information Repositories (MA and CT)

Photographs of Erosion above the riprap on Parcel I6-1-68 that requires stabilization

