

September 19, 2016

TO: Lynn Nakashima, Project Manager

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From: Tarnel Abbott

RE: Comments on Draft Feasibility Study/Remedial Action Plan Habitat Area 2
Zeneca/Former Stauffer Chemical Company in Richmond, CA

I would like to thank the Department for granting the extension for the public comment period to October 10, 2016.

At the public hearing regarding the Draft FSRAP Remedial Action Plan Habitat Area 2 Zeneca August 24, 2016 Zeneca, the Responsible Party (RP), presented an abbreviated power point of the FSRAP the stated goal of which was to **remediate** the affected area: the fresh water lagoons (former chemical evaporation ponds).

The RP (Zeneca) presentation stated that prior to 1960 the area was un-vegetated intertidal mudflat. Whether it was a marsh or a mudflat is not clear from the historical maps. The area was certainly an integral part of a wetland which included Stege Marsh on the bay side. The “freshwater lagoons” were artificial chemical evaporation ponds. Remediation means to provide a remedy, a cure, or, legally, to right a wrong.

A remedy which does not remove all the toxic waste is a band-aid, not a remedy. The proposals put forward by Zeneca, the RP, will leave toxic levels of arsenic, PCBs, heavy metals, DDD, DDT, benzene, proprietary pesticides and other compounds in the ground where they will continue to leach into the surrounding soil, groundwater, Stege Marsh and the S.F. Bay and threaten the health of all the biota. It has been documented that the health of the fish in the adjacent Stege Marsh and surrounding waters has been severely compromised:

https://cfpub.epa.gov/ncer_abstracts/index.cfm/fuseaction/display.highlight/abstract/6116/report/F (Final Report Pacific Estuarine Ecosystem Indicator Research Consortium –PEEIR: Biological Responses to Contaminants Component: Biomarkers of Exposure, Effect, and Reproductive Impairment) This study of the hardy mudsucker fish which **stays** in its limited range, links the genetic damage and tumors, the reproductive disorganization of the fish resulting in ovotestes (both male and female sexual organs in one fish) to endocrine disrupting compounds and contaminants. Think of this like the canary in the coalmine. There is also the study of the effects of PCBs in silverside fish whose habitat is in close proximity and who also remain in place.

http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/TMDLs/sfbayp cbs/Greenfield%20and%20Allen%202012%20PCBs%20in%20SF%20Bay%20fora ge%20fish.pdf

Throughout the San Francisco Bay area there is a major push to restore our wetlands to a more naturalized state. The recent passage of a \$12 per year parcel tax measure (AA) with revenue earmarked for the restoration of wetlands surrounding the San Francisco Bay was on the ballot on [June 7, 2016](#), for [California](#) voters within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority. The fact that it was approved demonstrates the high level of public interest in wetland restoration. There are multiple good reasons for this. One reason is that the natural tidelands or wetlands are our best defense against rising sea level, tsunamis, and storm surges. In an earthquake zone this area will be prone to liquefaction and the almost certain failure of berms and other manmade structures. Natural wetlands are more flexible during these types of events. The community is interested in pursuing the idea of a wetland restoration to this area of our shoreline This would be an appropriate **remedy** for an environment that has been defiled by the chemical onslaught for the last century. I request that the DTSC require of the RP (Zeneca) a total and complete clean up to clean margins so that the former chemical evaporation ponds; aka the “freshwater lagoons”, aka Zeneca Habitat Area 2, can be remediated to its natural wetland state.

If the DTSC will not hold the RP to a high standard for this estuary area (Zeneca Habitat Area 2) which has outflow to Stege Marsh and Baxter Creek both of which connect to San Francisco Bay, home of the California Ridgway Rail (formerly known as California Clapper Rail), how can the community have any faith that the Department will seek appropriate cleanup from the RP for rest of the 86 acre highly contaminated Zeneca site which is on the “upland area” (a toxic waste dump covered with a “temporary “ cap) which has been allowed to remain in place since 2002? Without a thorough clean up now, we run the risk of recontamination in the future which in the long run will be even more costly financially as well as in long term environmental damage. Can EPA PRG levels be applied?

For the sake of human health and the health of the environment, the DTSC should seek an alternative that removes offsite all contaminated soil and sediment down to clean margins. The toxic legacy of these carcinogenic contaminants is also a matter of environmental justice: The demographics of Richmond show that people of color, and people from lower socio economic status have been overburdened by toxic pollution for the last century. There is a multi-generational and cumulative impact which leads to higher cancer rates. The compounds which have been accumulating in the former chemical evaporation ponds (aka “freshwater lagoons” used by Stauffer Chemical and Zeneca require remediation through a **stringent** cleanup

down to safe levels for potential future Campus Bay ground-level residential, or at least to true preindustrial background concentrations of 6 mg/kg arsenic. with

monitoring so that the DTSC can live up to its mission statement: “to protect California’s people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated resources, enforcing hazardous waste laws,…”

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