

Tuesday, June 15th, 2021

Basil Seggos,
Commissioner
New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-1011

RE: New York City Department of Environmental Protection

Commissioner,

There is a current threat to the communities that take their drinking water out of the Hudson River. As a Town Board member, in the Town of Poughkeepsie and as the Vice-Chairman of the Poughkeepsie Joint Water Board, I am familiar with these threats. This is not the first, nor will it be the last.

The NYCDEP is releasing turbid water into the Lower Esopus, in significant volumes repeatedly to correct the turbidity condition in their Ashokan Reservoir. A simple solution for them to just make the release, it clears their Reservoir up and almost zero cost. The impacts down stream are significant. Our communications to the NYCDEP, including inviting the NYCDEP Manager for the Ashokan, Mr. Bill Richardson to a Joint Water Board meeting to discuss alternatives to their current procedure. Mr. Richardson was not allowed to come to our Board meeting by his superiors at NYCDEP.

In the Mid-Hudson area there are seven communities that take their drinking water from the Hudson River. Clearly all of them have been negatively impacted by the actions of the NYCDEP. They will not even meet with us and talk about the problem! This area of the Hudson is our drinking water source exactly like their Ashokan reservoir is their drinking water source. Can you imagine their reaction if we took the sludge/mud that our plant takes out of the river water from their

turbidity, drove it up to the Ashokan and dumped it into one of the feeder streams? That's right, immediate, and most likely very strong.

However, they continue that to us, multiple times now and they will not even talk with us about the problem they are creating. It seems NYCDEP thinks it is above all the rest of the citizens of New York State because they are the "City of New York DEP" and New York State will not do anything to them.

As an elected official, I am asking your direct action on this matter. Is NYCDEP above New York State Law? Can the NYCDEP tell the New York State Department Environmental Protect what to do, or what NYCDEP will not do? During one of the past threats to the drinking water here in Poughkeepsie, I was at a meeting at our Water Plant. I sat across from representative of the utility company who was telling us they were going to use a bucket dredge to remove coal tar from the Hudson Riverbed, approximately 3,000 feet from our drinking water intakes. It was at this meeting that I told them, in New York State, if you are aware of a risk and consciously disregard that risk, you are acting recklessly. They would then be liable for whatever damages may occur.

Sir, your agency stood on the side of the residents and business here in Poughkeepsie, who get their drinking water from the Hudson River. Your agency pulled the permit from the utility company who was going to dredge Coal Tar near the Water Plants intakes and your agency shut down that project until they could clearly show your agency that what they wanted to do was safe and protected the drinking water. Since then, they have not met your agency's requirements and still have not gotten approval.

I ask that again this time, your agency acts to protect the Hudson River as a drinking water source. Stop the NYCDEP turbidity releases until such time as NYCDEP can demonstrate to the satisfaction of your department that the releases can be done safely and not negatively impact the Hudson River as a drinking water source to over 106,000 people. If you, Commissioner, want me to stand next to you and tell the

public exactly what you are doing to protect the Hudson as a drinking water source, just tell me where and when, I will be there.

Sincerely,

William G. Carlos, Jr.
Councilman, 2nd Ward
Town of Poughkeepsie

Vice Chairman of the
Poughkeepsie Joint Water Board

cc: Town Board
Town Supervisor
City of Poughkeepsie Common Council
Mayor of the City of Poughkeepsie
Poughkeepsie Joint Water Board