

(2) An example of the nominee's organizational achievements, describing in detail the accomplishment, its significance, and the executive's role:

The dredging of the Hudson River to remove sediment contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from the river bottom is a major step toward the restoration of the river, one of the country's most important cultural and ecological resources. The cleanup of the river will result in a healthier river ecosystem, improved public health and vast economic and recreational opportunities. George Pavlou has been at the center of this critical environmental project for more than three decades, and was instrumental in the years of work that lead to a landmark settlement with the General Electric Company (GE) to conduct the extensive dredging project under EPA's direction.

In May 2009, George Pavlou stood on the banks of the Hudson River near Fort Edward, New York and watched, along with more than 100 stakeholders, including elected officials from the federal, state and local governments; representatives of Hudson River communities; environmental organizations; and scores of reporters, as a dredge removed the first bucketful of contaminated sediment from the river. It was a proud moment for EPA and one for which George Pavlou deserves much credit.

Over a 30-year period ending in 1977, an estimated 1.3 million pounds of PCBs were discharged directly into the Hudson River from two GE plants in Hudson Falls and Fort Edward, New York. PCBs accumulated in the sediments in quiescent areas downstream of the GE plants. When the Fort Edward Dam was removed in 1973, PCB-contaminated sediments from behind the dam were redistributed throughout the Upper Hudson. The primary health risk continues to be the accumulation of PCBs in the human body through eating contaminated fish. Since 1976, high levels of PCBs in fish have led New York State to close various recreational and commercial fisheries and to issue advisories restricting the consumption of fish caught in the Hudson River. PCBs are considered probable human carcinogens and are linked to other adverse health effects such as low birth weight, thyroid disease, and learning, memory, and immune system disorders. PCBs in the river sediment also affect fish and wildlife.

In September 1984, EPA listed the Hudson River PCBs site - which is 200 miles long and runs from Hudson Falls in Washington County to the Battery in New York City - on the Superfund list of the most hazardous waste sites in the country. In 1990, EPA began a reassessment of its 1984 interim decision to take no action to clean up the sediment in the river. During the reassessment, GE publicly criticized the Agency's scientifically-supported position that PCBs are a probable human carcinogen, and EPA findings that PCBs were not safely buried and were being redistributed within the river. Residents of upper river agricultural areas, who were generally against dredging, feared that the dredging project would block navigation and disrupt their communities. The down river community was generally in favor of dredging, in the belief that it would hasten the recovery of the Hudson River fisheries.

In February 2002, EPA signed a Record of Decision that called for the removal of more than 2.65 cubic yards of contaminated sediment from a 40-mile stretch of the Upper

Hudson River. The work was to be conducted in two phases, with an independent review of the first year of dredging following Phase 1. GE had the option to opt-out of the second phase of dredging, pending the outcome of the peer review process.

In preparation for the first phase of dredging, a set of innovative engineering and quality of life performance standards were developed to ensure that the cleanup was conducted effectively and minimized the potential risks from the resuspension of PCBs during dredging and the impacts of the project on local communities. The project also required the construction of a huge dewatering facility to process the dredged sediment, the construction of a water line across the Hudson River to ensure that two municipal water suppliers are able to continue to provide safe drinking water during the dredging process, and a temporary granular activated carbon treatment system on the treatment system for a third community.

The Hudson River cleanup is being conducted by GE, with EPA oversight, under the terms of a landmark settlement with the company that has an estimated value of about \$2.5 billion. It is the largest settlement ever negotiated in the history of the Superfund program. In addition, EPA has received approximately \$80 million from GE for past site costs, and a Consent Decree calls for the company to pay EPA \$35 million for the Agency's future costs as part of its agreement to perform Phase 2 of the dredging program. EPA also reached an agreement with GE that requires the company to contribute an additional \$7 million towards the design and construction of the water systems.

George Pavlou has been engaged in almost every stage of the Hudson River project, bringing an impressive mix of talents and abilities to the effort for many years, and demonstrating outstanding leadership and excellent management skills throughout. During the early years of the project, George served as the Chief of the NY/Caribbean Remedial Action Branch of the Emergency and Remedial Response Division (ERRD), which had responsibility for hazardous waste cleanups, including the Hudson River. He continued his engagement in the project in various positions within the division until 1996, when he moved to the Division of Environmental Planning and Protection. George returned to ERRD as its Director in 2002, at a critical moment in the project's history, and has continued to play a pivotal role in leading the Hudson River cleanup to this day. Over the years, he has been directly involved in most major decisions on the project, and has managed and mentored scores of EPA staff from many disciplines, who have contributed to the effort.

The Hudson River is a technically and legally complex site, and George's engineering expertise and his skills in negotiation and collaboration have been essential to the progress that has been made to-date. George played an essential part in the negotiations with GE on the design of the work plan for the first phase of the cleanup, and especially the development of the engineering and quality of life performance standards for the site, which are models for Superfund cleanups throughout the country. George also demonstrated his strong support for active community engagement and the need to keep communities informed and to listen carefully to their concerns. He supported the

establishment of a staffed Hudson River Field Office in Fort Edward, New York; the establishment of a Community Advisory Group, supported by a neutral facilitator; and a revamped community outreach program that addressed community concerns, but especially those of local residents and business operators who might be affected by the dredging project.

In 2004 and 2005, while serving as Acting Deputy Regional Administrator, George shepherded technical and scientific decisions through the negotiation of two Administrative Orders that enable the detailed design work to take place, and EPA costs of \$35 million to be recovered and devoted to site work. This progress allowed GE to develop sufficient data and provided the company with the confidence to enter into final negotiations on implementing the dredging. This approach was unusual (negotiations typically are conducted for design and implementation), but George believed that the extraordinary scope of the remedy called for an innovative approach.

The negotiations were arduous and very time-intensive, and addressed numerous complex legal and technical issues relating to the technical details of how GE will perform the work, the requirements for the review of the Phase 1 work, and GE's opt-in/out decision for Phase 2. The final Consent Decree is a historic achievement for the government and for the people of New York State, especially in light of GE's strong opposition to the dredging remedy for the site. With George's leadership, the final negotiations were highly successful, and have brought us to the second and final phase of the dredging, scheduled to begin in May 2011.

The historical settlement and protective cleanup plan would not have been achieved without George's expertise, flexibility, leadership and creativity. His perseverance and dedication over so many years have been truly extraordinary, and have contributed in a major way to the long-awaited cleanup of this precious historic and natural resource.