



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

OCT -4 2017

Honorable Josh Gottheimer
U.S. House of Representatives
213 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Gottheimer:

Thank you for your letter of August 22, 2017 concerning the Ringwood Mines/Landfill Superfund site in Ringwood, New Jersey, in which you seek confirmation regarding the protectiveness of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's selected remedy for the O'Connor Disposal Area (OCDA) of the site. I apologize for our delay in replying to your letter.

In the EPA's June 2014 Record of Decision (ROD) for the site, EPA selected a cleanup plan for the OCDA that included the excavation and off-site disposal of all of the fill material from this area of the site. The ROD also provided for a "Contingency Remedy" comprised of capping the OCDA, which EPA concluded could also be conducted in a manner that would be protective of human health and the environment.

As explained in the ROD, while capping of the OCDA could be conducted in a manner that would be protective of human health and the environment, EPA anticipated that extensive maintenance of the cap would likely be required to maintain protectiveness. When assessing potential remedies, expected future land use is an important consideration. If the land use at and surrounding the OCDA was to be open space, protecting and maintaining the cap would be a challenge: all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) are routinely used in the surrounding area, and fencing currently installed at the site has not proven effective in restricting ATVs from the OCDA. EPA believed that the likely use of ATVs across the capped area would harm the cap, requiring repeated maintenance to preserve the protectiveness of the cap.

Shortly before EPA released its proposed plan for cleanup of the OCDA, the Borough of Ringwood informed EPA that it intended to construct a new recycling center in the OCDA. The planned construction of the recycling center would address EPA's long-term maintenance concerns, since the construction would include capping a portion of the OCDA with asphalt and would also ensure an on-site presence to deter unauthorized access.

While it is not EPA's role to determine how a municipality or property owner may reuse a cleaned-up site, EPA works with communities and property owners to ensure that implemented remedies do not create barriers for safe, viable reuse of site properties. Therefore, the ROD provided for capping of the OCDA as a contingency remedy, should the Borough of Ringwood

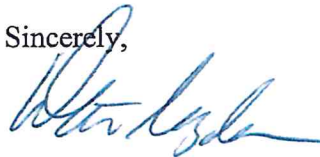
provide specified documentation to ensure the Borough's commitment to construction of the recycling center. The Borough provided this information in a timely manner and, in April 2015, the EPA determined that the criteria for the selection of the contingency remedy had been met.

Subsequent to selection of the Contingency Remedy for the OCDA, EPA identified the presence of 1,4-dioxane in groundwater and surface water at the site. The results of recent groundwater investigations conducted at the site indicate that 1,4-dioxane is detected primarily in another distinct area of the site, outside of the OCDA. Furthermore, soils investigations conducted in the OCDA in December 2016 did not identify a source of 1,4-dioxane in this area of the site. Therefore, EPA's conclusion that the capping remedy for the OCDA will be fully protective of human health and the environment is unchanged.

Since 2015, EPA has required that groundwater and surface water at and in proximity to the site be monitored for the presence of 1,4-dioxane. The results of this monitoring indicate that 1,4-dioxane is present at low levels in streams near the site, but is not detected in stream samples collected near the Wanaque Reservoir. Furthermore, 1,4-dioxane was not detected in samples collected from the Wanaque Reservoir by the North Jersey District Water Supply Commission in 2013 and 2016. Similarly, 1,4-dioxane was not detected at levels of concern in water samples collected by the Borough of Ringwood from their municipal wells in 2013 and 2016. These data indicate that the Wanaque Reservoir and the Borough of Ringwood's municipal wells have not been impacted by site contamination and are not expected to be in the future. EPA will continue to provide for the periodic monitoring of groundwater and surface water at the site to ensure that drinking water resources are not impacted by site contamination.

Thank you for your interest in EPA's cleanup efforts at the Ringwood Mines/Landfill Superfund site. If you have further questions, please contact me at (212) 637-5000 or have your staff contact Michael McGowan, Chief of the Intergovernmental and Community Affairs Branch, at (212) 637-4972.

Sincerely,



Walter Mugdan
Acting Deputy Regional Administrator