

Groups urge using latest technology for Housatonic PCB cleanup

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PITTSFIELD - A group of community organizations from the Berkshires is urging federal regulators to take a fresh approach to removing PCBs from the Housatonic River.

The group, calling itself the Housatonic Clean River Coalition, wrote to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency suggesting that the cleanup be conducted in phases using the latest technology.

General Electric used PCBs, or polychlorinated biphenyls, at its Pittsfield plant until 1977, when the federal government banned them. The chemical is considered a possible carcinogen.

A cleanup settlement with GE was reached in 2000. The EPA and GE already have dredged the first two miles of Housatonic.

The coalition also suggests more community input, limiting disruption to the environment and barring permanent landfills.

Information from: The Berkshire Eagle, <http://www.berkshireeagle.com>

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