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P.C.B. IN FISH STIRS NEW STATE STUDY

Reid Reports High Levels of the Toxic Chemicals in 3 More Waterways

By ROBERT HANLEY

Unhealthy levels of the toxic chemical PCB have been found waterways, prompting the State Environmental Conservation Department to begin planning a broadened campaign to detect, analyze and possibly combat the compound.

The department's discovery of tainted fish in the St. Lawrence River, the Mohawk River and Lake Champlain follows warnings in the last five weeks [illegible] R. Reid, the Environmental Commissioner, that several species of fish in the Hudson River and Lake Ontario had been contaminated by PCB and possibly were unfit for human consumption.

Mr. Reid disclosed the additional findings over the weekend after he met last Thursday in Albany with 40 scientists from around the country to consider ways to rid the Hudson of the chemical.

Tracing all the sources of PCB, which is used in the manufacture of electrical equipment, printing inks, paints and hydraulic fluids, is an elusive goal, the Commissioner said.

Hudson Contamination High

[illegible] all the contamination found in the Hudson River had been the highest of the five bodies of water, and Mr. Reid said he feared that the river was "approaching irreversible and irreparable damage."

Restoration, he said, "is a process that could take decades."

A major problem in combating PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl) is that it is not readily [illegible] in water, Mr. Reid ex[illegible]. Thirty per cent heavier [illegible] water, it sinks to lake [illegible] river bottoms and clings [illegible] particles in silt and se[illegible].

[illegible] ingested, PCB is highly [illegible] under [illegible] in fats and concentrates [illegible] underbellies and eggs [illegible] fresh-water [illegible]. [illegible], chimpanzees and [illegible] chemical is thought [illegible] liver cancer [illegible]. Its effect on humans [illegible] under study.

[illegible] Federal standards say that [illegible] containing more than five [illegible] PCB per million parts [illegible] are unsafe to eat and [illegible] not be shipped in inter[illegible] commerce.

[illegible] seats on [illegible] in the Mohawk River [illegible] Mr. [illegible] Other [illegible] from the catch included [illegible] south bass, [illegible] parts [illegible] 14 parts per million, [illegible] St. Lawrence, [illegible] parts [illegible] south bass [illegible] off Cape Vincent, near [illegible] where the river flows [illegible] Ontario.

[illegible] catch of white suck[illegible] from Lake Champlain [illegible] an average of [illegible] parts [illegible].

[illegible] Commissioner Reid also re[illegible] that new testing in the [illegible] showed the following [illegible] in several catches on [illegible] at Waterford, near [illegible] small-mouth bass, 41.5 [illegible] parts per million; [illegible] suckers, 28.2 and 48.9 [illegible] and walleyed pike, 32.4 [illegible].

[illegible] Sea Considered

[illegible] chinook salmon taken [illegible] from Lake Ontario and [illegible] Salmon River, which [illegible] into the [illegible] about [illegible] east of Oswego, con[illegible] averages of 10 and 12 [illegible].

[illegible] of these findings, [illegible] Reid said, he is [illegible] in attempt to ban [illegible] commercial sales of Lake [illegible] chinook salmon in the [illegible].

[illegible] only documented indus[illegible] source for PCB in the [illegible] is two General Electric [illegible] about 60 miles north [illegible]. The Environmental [illegible] Department has [illegible] action to halt those dis[illegible] by Sept. 30, 1978.

[illegible] theory to be examined [illegible] by the department is [illegible] in the waterways [illegible] becomes part of the [illegible] process.

[illegible] had one report that [illegible] now in Wisconsin and [illegible]," Commissioner [illegible]. The interference is [illegible] by the air."

[illegible] said he was also puzzled [illegible] findings that some small[illegible] bass in the Chemung [illegible] near Elmira, N.Y., had traces of the chemical in them, although well below the Federal danger standard. But none of the five companies in the state that use PCB is situated anywhere near Elmira.

An in-depth source-study is one facet of a long-range program being prepared by Mr. Reid's staff for sumission to Governor Carey on Oct. 15.

Other elements of the program include the following:

¶The hiring of additional fish pathologists.

¶The expansion of testing laboratories in Delmar and Rome.

¶Extension of the monitrooring program to include fish, sediments and au aquatic wild fowl in and around Lake George and the Finger Lakes, the reservoirs and rivers of New York City's watershed and Long Island Sound.

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