

Message

From: Wilcox, Jahan [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=88FD588E97D3405D869BCAE98D391984-WILCOX, JAH]
Sent: 2/14/2018 10:47:47 PM
To: Sarah Kerr [Ex. 6]
CC: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]; Falvo, Nicholas [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=424ac90ea7d8494a93209d14d37f2946-Falvo, Nich]
Subject: RE: Press inquiry: weakening of enforcement at NYC superfund / WNYC

“Administrator Pruitt has said he will hold polluters accountable, which includes cleaning up Gowanus.” - EPA spokesman, Jahan Wilcox

From: Sarah Kerr [Ex. 6]
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2018 12:22 PM
To: Wilcox, Jahan <wilcox.jahan@epa.gov>
Cc: Press <Press@epa.gov>; Falvo, Nicholas <falvo.nicholas@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Press inquiry: weakening of enforcement at NYC superfund / WNYC

Thanks Jahan, your help is much appreciated. Can we also please have a direct response to this specific question: Will EPA compel polluters to shoulder their share of the Gowanus cleanup?

Best,

On Wed, Feb 14, 2018 at 10:37 AM, Wilcox, Jahan <wilcox.jahan@epa.gov> wrote:

I would also flag this USA Today op-ed where Pruitt outlines how he’s been tougher than most parties have expected.

- <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2018/02/14/clean-air-land-and-water-time-epa-start-keeping-its-promises-column/333815002/>

Clean Air, Land and Water: Time for the EPA to Start Keeping Its Promises

In less than a year, the Trump administration will solve a problem that previous administrations could not fix since 1990.

Administrator Scott Pruitt

February 14, 2018

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2018/02/14/clean-air-land-and-water-time-epa-start-keeping-its-promises-column/333815002/>

From: Wilcox, Jahan
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2018 10:15 AM
To: [REDACTED] **Ex. 6**
Cc: Press <Press@epa.gov>; Falvo, Nicholas <falvo.nicholas@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: Press inquiry: weakening of enforcement at NYC superfund / WNYC

Referring you to these two quotes that you can use, that Scott Pruitt made in two recent interviews.

- **BLOOMBERG:** “They don’t know me,; Pruitt said, during an interview with Bloomberg News in his Washington office. ‘I’ve led a grand jury. We are going to do enforcement, to go after bad actors and go after polluters.’ Pruitt, the former Oklahoma attorney general, is leading the efforts to roll back Obama-era environmental regulations, including the first limits on carbon dioxide emissions from power plants and an overhaul of clean-water rules. Despite moving to rescind those measures, those that remain in place will be fully enforced, he said. ‘I know what it means to prosecute people,’ he said. ‘And we’ve got some of those folks across the country -- those people that are intentionally taking steps to pollute our water, to pollute our air.’” (Bloomberg, 10/25/17)
- **TIME:** “I don’t spend any time with polluters. I prosecute polluters.” (Time, 10/26/17)

He also addresses these claims in his interview with The New York Times a few weeks ago.

- **THE NEW YORK TIMES:** <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/02/podcasts/the-daily/scott-pruitt-epa.html>

From: Sarah Kerr [REDACTED] **Ex. 6**
Sent: Wednesday, February 14, 2018 9:58 AM
To: Wilcox, Jahan <wilcox.jahan@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Press inquiry: weakening of enforcement at NYC superfund / WNYC

Hi Jahan,

Regarding our phone conversation yesterday: my editor wants a response from the E.P.A. in our story, so as to get your side in there and to make the story more fair. I hope you'll give us something in order for us to be able to do that.

Can you please respond to the main premise of our story, which is that activists and former EPA employees worry that this historic cleanup at the Gowanus Canal could be slowed down or impaired by what they say is a more lenient approach toward polluters and industry folks from this administration. This could pose a problem, they say, since many of the identified polluters at the canal are already insisting they're not responsible. Will the EPA under this administration hold these parties feet to the fire, or is there a different approach? Will the Gowanus Canal's cleanup be impacted by all of this?

Again, any comment would help give us a sense of the EPA's side.

Thanks in advance,

On Tue, Feb 13, 2018 at 1:16 PM, Sarah Kerr <Ex. 6> wrote:

Hi Jahan,

This story ended up getting delayed and I wanted to check in to see if you might be able to connect today or tomorrow to discuss the questions above.

Might there be a good time for me to give you a call or are you able to answer these questions at all via email?

Thanks,

On Mon, Jan 8, 2018 at 6:20 PM, Sarah Kerr <Ex. 6> wrote:

Hi Jahan,

Sorry we missed each other today. Is there a time tomorrow that might work for me to give you a call?

Thanks,

On Mon, Jan 8, 2018 at 11:38 AM, Sarah Kerr <Ex. 6> wrote:

Hi Jahan,

Thanks for the prompt response. I am currently tied up with something. Will you be at your desk for the next few hours?

On Mon, Jan 8, 2018 at 11:31 AM, Wilcox, Jahan <wilcox.jahan@epa.gov> wrote:

Just tried to call you

From: Sarah Kerr [Ex. 6]
Sent: Monday, January 8, 2018 11:07 AM
To: Press <Press@epa.gov>
Cc: Annie Nova <annie.nova@journalism.cuny.edu>
Subject: Press inquiry: weakening of enforcement at NYC superfund / WNYC

Hello,

I am a freelance reporter working on a story for WNYC along with my colleague Annie Nova, CCed here.

We are currently working on a story about the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn, NY, a federal Superfund site.

We have had a number of sources outside of E.P.A. including former E.P.A. staff, environmental lawyers, and local activists, say that changes at E.P.A. under Administrator Pruitt may weaken the ability of the agency to hold polluters to full legal and financial account at sites like Gowanus – and give them more room to drag out and delay cleanups.

Specifically, they have cited Administrator Pruitt's interest in ending funding for the Environmental and Natural Resources Division of the Department of Justice, staff reductions within the agency, examples of fewer enforcement proceedings in other areas, such as civil enforcement in comparison to other Republican and Democratic administrations, and a general pro-industry policy shift.

Does E.P.A. have any comment in response to these claims?

We're also mentioning that many of the identified polluters at the Gowanus deny that they contributed. Does the EPA believe this will affect the cleanup?

We are working on a Thursday deadline.

Thank you.

Best,

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Sarah S. Kerr

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