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DEC ANNOUNCES CONSENT ORDER TO REMEDIATE GROUNDWATER PLUME AT BETHPAGE GRUMMAN SITE

Northrup Grumman Agrees to Clean Up Contaminated Groundwater Consultant Selected to Study Plume

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) finalized a consent order requiring Northrup Grumman to address elevated levels of groundwater contamination originating at its Bethpage site, DEC Commissioner Joe Martens announced today.

Under the order signed by DEC, Northrup Grumman will be obligated to participate in the cleanup of groundwater originating at the site and cooperate with the U.S. Navy on a remedial design and remedial action work plan the Navy submitted to DEC to remediate contaminant “hot spots” recently identified in the large groundwater plume known as Operable Unit 2 (OU2).

In addition, the order requires Northrup Grumman to continue to operate the on-site containment system to extract and treat groundwater to contain the source of the OU2 plume. The company is also required to perform regional monitoring of the plume and monitoring of outpost wells to detect the movement of contaminants in the groundwater.

“This consent order is a significant step forward to ensure that the responsible parties take action to identify, contain and clean up the groundwater contamination associated with the Bethpage plume,” Commissioner Martens said. “The Bethpage Northrup Grumman property is a complex site with unique challenges. DEC will continue to require the responsible parties to perform extensive monitoring and remediation as part of an overall remedy to protect public health and the environment.”

State Senator Kemp Hannon said, “The comprehensive consent order is a significant step to addressing the thorny problem of groundwater pollution underneath the former Grumman/Navy site. Each of the parties are to be congratulated and I look forward to longer term actions to resolve the problem.”

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The new Consent Order is the latest step taken by DEC to ensure that the parties responsible for the pollution take the necessary steps to protect public health and the environment at this site. Northrop Grumman has installed and operated systems to prevent additional groundwater contamination from migrating off the site and to control any vapors that might migrate. The level of contamination in the groundwater plume near the site has been reduced. In September 2014, the U.S. Navy identified hotspots of contamination in the plume and is working to address them. In addition, impacted drinking water is being treated to ensure it meets all standards.

A large part of the former 600-plus-acre Northrop Grumman - Bethpage Facility site is a State Superfund site. Contamination of the property occurred as a result of disposal of wastes generated by industrial operations, including chromium, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which consist of chlorinated solvents used to clean or degrease machinery or fabricated parts.

State Department of Health Study

The State Health Department, in consultation with the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, is working to examine if there are any health impacts associated with exposure to groundwater contamination in the Bethpage and Calverton areas of Long Island. Consistent with a health consultation of this type, the contaminants evaluated are volatile organic compounds, specifically, tetrachloroethene, trichloroethene and subsequent breakdown products. A health consultation report will be developed and released to the public when it is complete.

Contractor Selected to Analyze Options for Intercepting and Remediating Groundwater Plume

As required by a law signed by Governor Cuomo last year, DEC has selected HDR Inc., of Mahwah, New Jersey to evaluate options for intercepting and remediating the main groundwater plume emanating from the former Naval Weapons Industrial Plant operated by the United States Navy and the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation facilities in Bethpage. HDR's report will focus on utilizing hydraulic containment and state-of-the-art remediation practices to remove the contaminants without requiring wellhead treatment which the law characterizes as a measure of last resort. In evaluating these options, the remedial measures should seek to achieve this goal in a timely manner to stop the migration of the plume before it reaches public water supply wells, while also protecting natural resources, including the fresh water bodies, tributaries, wetlands and Great South Bay. The report will include estimates of the cost, scope and timetable for the project.

HDR is currently working as a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) contractor at the New Cassel/Hicksville Groundwater Contamination NPL site, located approximately three miles west of the Grumman site. Because that site is very similar to the Northrop Grumman site with a migrating plume, HDR has a thorough understanding of the subsurface conditions, geology and hydrogeology of the area. DEC will shortly finalize a scope of work to complete the evaluation required by the state law and expects the project to begin by late May.

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DEC evaluated remedial alternatives for the main groundwater plume and selected the remedy in 2001. It was again re-evaluated in the Navy Optimization Report completed in June 2011 by a Technical Team made up of the U.S. Geological Survey, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Navy and DEC. The study will be paid for with \$150,000 secured by Senator Kemp Hannon in the 2015-16 State budget.

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