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Gavin Newsom
Governor

August 19, 2026

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Mr. Mike Buck
On Behalf Of:
Mendocino Railway and
Sierra Northern Railway
1222 Research Park Drive
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REVIEW OF DRAFT FEASIBILITY STUDY ADDENDUM OPERABLE UNIT E,
FORMER GEORGIA-PACIFIC MILL SITE, FORT BRAGG, CALIFORNIA (SITE CODE
202276)

Dear Mr. Buck,

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has reviewed and is providing comments on the draft Feasibility Study Addendum Operable Unit E (OU-E) (FS Addendum) for the former Georgia-Pacific Mill Site (Site) prepared by Kennedy Jenks and dated April 2, 2025. The FS Addendum presents new alternatives for three Areas of Concern (AOCs) in OU-E (Pond 7 Aquatic Sediment, North Pond and Pond 6 Aquatic Sediment, and Pond 8 Aquatic Sediment). The FS Addendum evaluates the new alternatives along with the alternatives previously evaluated in the 2019 OU-E FS. DTSC's Site Mitigation and Restoration Program (SMRP), Geological Services Branch (GSB), Engineering and Special Projects Office (ESPO), Human and Ecological Risk Office (HERO), and Ecological Risk Assessment Section (ERAS) reviewed the FS Addendum. Comments are provided below.

Project Manager Comments:

General Comments:

1. The OU-E FS Addendum refers to the Draft OU-E Remedial Action Plan (RAP) in several locations in the text. Please delete references to the Draft OU-E RAP because that document is incomplete and will not be finalized. A new Draft RAP will be prepared following the Final FS Addendum.
2. The FS Addendum sections describing the reduction of toxicity, mobility, or volume of contamination for each alternative state that contamination in sediment does not present significant risk to receptors under current conditions. This does not accurately represent DTSC's risk management decision. On August 24, 2015, DTSC conveyed our risk management decision to Georgia-Pacific stating: *"Consistent with the conclusions of the BHHERA and data presented in the OU-E Remedial Investigation Report, DTSC has determined that the following areas require evaluation in the upcoming OU-E Feasibility Study"*, and DTSC listed, among other areas, Pond 7, Pond 6, the North Pond, and Pond 8. The letter is available to the public at: https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/getfile?filename=/public%2Fdeliverable_documents%2F6842025578%2FFormer%20Pacific%20wood%20Products%20Facility%20OUE%20Areas%20to%20Be%20Included%20in%20FS%2008.24.2015.pdf. For the FS Addendum, DTSC requests that Mendocino Railway (1) remove language suggesting that the risks are not significant or are limited under current conditions, (2) state the risk estimates, and (3) refer the reader to the Final Baseline Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment (BHHERA; Arcadis, 2015) for additional information.
3. DTSC requested that climate change and sea level rise be evaluated in the Feasibility Study. Please revise the FS Addendum to include an evaluation of the long-term effectiveness of each alternative presented in the FS Addendum and 2019 Feasibility Study per the "Sea Level Rise Guidance to DTSC Project Managers for Clean Up Activities" (February 2023, pages 5-6).

Specific Comments:

1. Section 1.1.1 OU-E Regulatory Status, paragraph 2. The second paragraph of Section 1.1.1 notes that the exposure scenario is considered conservative because access is restricted and warnings are posted to prohibit visitors from entering the ponds which are located on private property. Please revise the text to describe the access for each pond separately. DTSC notes that, based on photographs provided by members of the public, access restrictions have been intermittent because the fence surrounding Pond 8 is primitive, and frequently breached or in need of maintenance. Please revise the text to delete claims that Pond 8 is effectively restricted until the fence is replaced to comply with the *First Amendment to Site Investigation and Remediation Order* dated June 9, 2022, which states:

*5.1.3 Fence and Posting Warning Signs. As of the effective date of this Order First Amendment and due to the completion of remedial actions in Operable Units (OU)-A, C, D, and a portion of (OU)-E, warning signs are not required along the perimeter of the site or at routes of entry. **Fencing is required around Pond 8.** Respondents shall install additional fencing and post signs at other locations at the site within 10 days of a written notice from DTSC. (emphasis added)*

DTSC will follow up with Mendocino Railway separately to ensure that the Pond 8 fencing effectively controls access and withstands the elements.

2. Section 1.1.1 OU-E Regulatory Status, paragraph 2, second sentence and fourth sentence. The text describing the passive recreational scenario is potentially misleading. The exposure frequency that includes 24 hours per day also considers potential secondary exposure, not only the assumption of an individual in a pond for 24 hours per day for 50 days per year (BHHERA Section 6.1.1). Please revise the text to simply state the exposure frequency and refer the reader to the BHHERA.
3. Section 1.1.1 OU-E Regulatory Status, second full paragraph, page 1-3. The text states that DTSC requested evaluation of additional alternatives in an OU-E FS Addendum but does not explain why. DTSC requested evaluation of additional alternatives because we learned from the Coastal Commission that alternatives to armoring (a component of the preferred remedial action for Pond 8) must be considered prior to approval of the Coastal Development Permit (CDP) by the

City of Fort Bragg. The CDP is required for RAP implementation. Please expand the text in this paragraph to provide this additional information and include a reference to DTSC's 2022 letter to Mendocino Railway on this topic.

4. Section 1.1.2.1 Pond 7. The Risk Summary (Section 1.1.2.1.1) notes that the entire footprint of Pond 7 was excavated in 2017 but the Removal Action Area and Remedial Alternative Development section (1.1.2.1.2) states that additional excavation was not feasible without further explanation. The residual risks at Pond 7 following the removal action are unclear. The new remedial action area is not depicted on a figure. Please revise this section to (1) clearly explain the residual risks at Pond 7 following the removal action and (2) explain the limitations on excavation of Pond 7 during the removal action. Please provide a figure showing representative sediment data and the proposed remedial action area.
5. Section 1.1.2.3.1 Risk Summary, first bullet. The text lists barrier fencing and signage as factors that discourage access. However, DTSC notes that, based on photographs provided by members of the public, access restrictions have been intermittent. Please see Comment 1 above and revise the text pending restoration of effective site access controls.
6. Section 1.1.2.3.1 Risk Summary, last paragraph. The exposure point concentration (EPC) for dioxin TEQ [toxic equivalents] in Pond 8 sediment was updated using new and deeper data that were not available in the OU-E Feasibility Study (Kennedy Jenks, 2019). The updated EPC was compared with the EPC in the BHHRA. Because the updated value includes deeper data that are not representative of the exposures modeled in the BHHRA, the two values are not directly comparable, and the updated value should not be used to estimate human health risk. DTSC requests that the updated value be reported as the 95% upper confidence limit on the mean (95%UCL) of the entire Pond 8 sediment dataset, rather than as an exposure point concentration.
7. Section 1.1.3.1 Objectives and Requirements of Remediation.
 - a. First bullet regarding Applicable or Relevant and Appropriate Requirements (ARARs). It is unclear whether the alternatives meet California Coastal Commission law and the City of Fort Bragg's Local Coastal Plan. Please provide letters from the California Coastal Commission, City of Fort Bragg, and Division of Safety of Dams with their concurrence that the FS Addendum alternatives meet their ARARs.

- b. Second bullet regarding Remedial Action Objectives (RAOs). The text refers to the OU-E FS (Kennedy Jenks, 2019) for the RAOs. Please include the relevant RAO in the FS Addendum (e.g., prevent the ingestion of and incidental contact with chemicals of concern in sediments that exceed remedial goals by users of the former Mill Site. The relevant human exposure pathways for the passive recreator receptor in the aquatic area included: incidental sediment ingestion, dermal contact with sediment, and contact with surface water).
 - c. Third bullet regarding Chemical-Specific Remedial Goals. Please list the relevant remedial goals in the FS Addendum rather than refer to the 2019 FS.
8. Section 1.1.4, Additional Project Objectives.
- a. The list of project objectives is reproduced from Mendocino Railway's August 30, 2024 letter without refinement. Bullets 1 and 2 should be revised to state only project objectives and not repeat the point made in the final sentence of the section that the sediments are on private property with access restrictions.
 - b. The text, here and in other sections, discusses dioxin source attribution for Pond 8 raising concerns about City stormwater discharge to the pond. The assertions made in the text are not substantiated in the FS Addendum and source attribution is outside the scope of the Feasibility Study for OU-E. The goals of the Feasibility Study are to:
 - i. Document all treatability studies conducted.
 - ii. Develop medium-specific or operable-unit-specific remedial action objectives, including legal requirements and other promulgated standards that are relevant.
 - iii. Identify and screen general response actions, remedial technologies, and process options on a medium and/or operable unit specific basis.
 - iv. Evaluate alternatives based on the criteria contained in the National Contingency Plan

Please strike the last three sentences of the fourth bullet regarding stormwater.

The last bullet suggests that it may be infeasible to identify a remedial alternative that meets ARARs. The remedy must meet ARARs. Please revise the last bullet to clarify that the recommended alternative will comply with ARARs.

9. Section 1.3, Report Organization. Please include the Tables, Figures, and Appendix that follow Section 5.
10. Section 2.1, Creek Daylighting. The text interprets creek daylighting as follows, “It is noted that in current conditions, the Mill Pond is “daylighted” from the outlets of the City’s Maple and Alder Creek storm drain outfalls in Pond 8 East to the ocean.” Acknowledge “daylighting” as it is typically employed by the public meaning: “Rerouting Alder and Maple Creek drainages via Pond 8 East or directly through a swale or stream channel to a freshwater wetland constructed in OU-E lowland area.”¹ DTSC is not asking for further evaluation of “daylighting” of the creeks. DTSC is asking for acknowledgment of the community’s desires as described by the City of Fort Bragg Mill Pond Complex Planning Framework October 20, 2010, the Mill Site Creek Daylighting – Road Map produced by Wynn Coastal Planning March 5, 2015, and the Joint City Council & Planning Commission Work Session Regarding Possible Future Daylighting of Creeks on Mill Site March 23, 2017. DTSC requests that the evaluation and selection of remedial alternatives in the Feasibility Study does not preclude the possibility of daylighting the creeks in the future. The text should be revised to discuss the suitability of each alternative for potential future creek daylighting, as this information is relevant with respect to the community acceptance criterion.
11. Section 2.2.1 Sediment Remedial Technologies.
 - a. Natural Recovery. This section briefly discusses natural recovery suggesting that progress toward remedial goals may be achieved under institutional controls. However, natural recovery is not mentioned again in the document. DTSC requests that this concept be more fully developed in

¹ See Fort Bragg City Council & Planning Commission Work Session Packet October 20, 2010. PDF p. 14–17.

the text, especially for dioxins. Please specifically discuss the half-life of dioxins in sediments.

- b. Containment. The text identifies the existing Mill Pond Dam and beach berm as containment structures for Ponds 6, 7, 8 and the North Pond. Please provide more detail substantiating that the existing berm is currently keeping sediment in place and clarify that such structures are considered “vertical barriers” to differentiate between the covers described in the preceding paragraph.
- c. In-situ physical treatment. The second paragraph states that in-situ soil mixing requires significant volumes of binders and Portland cement to be effective. The word significant is ambiguous. Provide the volume of binder and Portland cement or revise the text.

The third paragraph notes that the use of Portland cement in aquatic environments is generally not accepted without significant mitigation due to elevated pH and the loss of suitable habitat. The word significant is ambiguous. Provide the mitigation measures necessary or revise the text.

- 12. Section 2.2.2 Recommended Alternative. This section provides the recommended alternatives included in the Draft RAP. However, the RAP will require substantial changes to incorporate the FS Addendum. Please refrain from referencing the Draft RAP in the FS Addendum. DTSC recommends referencing the FS in this section.
- 13. Section 2.3.1, Preliminary Identification and Screening of Technologies and Process Options. This section does not screen new technologies and process options as Section 5.2 of the 2019 FS did but instead discusses various combinations that are de facto draft remedial alternatives. Please revise the text to explain whether and how a screening of technologies and process options was conducted to develop the new alternatives presented in the FS Addendum.
- 14. Section 2.3.2 Evaluation of Technology Types and Selection of Representative Process Options. The last paragraph of this section states that a landfill, waste disposal, and other waste containment is not an allowed use on the property. The City has said that the on-site terrestrial treatment and consolidation of contaminated sediment could be permissible (Letter from City of Fort Bragg to DTSC November 7, 2025 available at https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/getfile?filename=/public%2Fdeliverable_docu

[ments%2F1901768326%2FCity%20of%20FB%20Consolidation%20Cell%20Letter%2011072025.pdf](#)). Please revise the text.

15. Section 2.3.3 Alternatives Retained for Further Evaluation. The alternatives described in this section are not depicted in accompanying figures. Features such as the crib wall, spillway, beach berm, and Mill Pond Dam are also not depicted on figures in the FS Addendum. Please provide figures illustrating site features and the FS Addendum alternatives retained for further evaluation.
16. Section 3 Development and Evaluation of Additional Remedial Alternatives, Table 3-1. The Risk Summary column entry for Pond 7 lists the excess lifetime cancer risk (ELCR) from the BHHRA (2E-05). However, at Pond 7, contaminated sediment was removed and replaced with three feet of clean fill in 2017. Please revise this entry to state the residual risk at Pond 7 (see also Comment 4 above).

The Description column entry for Pond 7 describes the new alternative without describing the excavation work at Pond 7. In 2017, complete excavation was not feasible at Pond 7. Please revise this entry to clarify how Pond 7 would be excavated.

Descriptions and titles of the alternatives in the FS Addendum should be clearly distinguished from the 2019 Feasibility Study. "Pond 8 West Excavation and Disposal" includes the excavation and disposal of North Pond, Pond 6, and Pond 7. Please rename the alternative for clarity and provide a more detailed description.

The new alternative is listed in Table 3-1 as "Excavation and Fill of Pond 8 West, Sediment Disposal, and Dam Modifications", but in the text as "Pond 8 West Excavation and Disposal". The text indicates that Pond 8 West (among others) would be excavated; there is no mention of backfilling the pond post-excavation in Section 2.3.3.1, Pond 8 West Excavation and Disposal (this is only mentioned in Section 2.3.1, Preliminary Identification and Screening of Technologies and Process Options). Please correct Table 3-1 accordingly. Furthermore, the Description column for the alternative for each Pond should reference the relevant areas to be excavated; all currently reference only Pond 8 West.

17. Section 3.1.1.1 Pond 7 Aquatic Sediment. Alternative 6 – Pond 8 West Excavation and Disposal – The text states that Alternative 6 would require significant sediment removal and removal/destruction of habitat in Pond 8 West,

Pond 7, Pond 6, and North Pond. The word significant is ambiguous. Provide the volume and/or areal extent of sediment that would be excavated from Pond 8 West, Pond 7, Pond 6 and North Pond or revise the text. This information is necessary to assess the habitat mitigation or restoration that would be required.

This text is repeated in Section 3.2.1.1 North Pond and Pond 6 Aquatic Sediment: Alternative 6 – Pond 8 West Excavation and Disposal, Section 3.3.1.1 Pond 8 Aquatic Sediment: Alternative 7 – Pond 8 West Excavation and Disposal, and Section 2.3.3.1 Pond 8 West Excavation and Disposal. Revise all instances. Furthermore, the text refers the reader to a Section 2.2.3.1 that does not exist; please review the text and ensure the descriptions of the alternatives are consistent and accurate throughout the FS Addendum.

18. Section 3.1.1.1.4 Reduction of Toxicity, Mobility, or Volume Through Treatment. The text estimates that the reduction in toxicity or risk from Pond 7 sediment is small. This statement should be supported by including the residual risk estimate after the removal action. Please revise the text to include this information.
19. Section 3.1.2 Selection of Preferred Alternative – Pond 7 Aquatic Sediment. The recommended alternative in the FS for Pond 7 was institutional controls (containment, land use controls, sediment management, and long-term operations and maintenance). The text in Section 3.1.2 of the FS Addendum states that the Institutional Controls alternative (Alternative 2) remains the preferred alternative for Pond 7 sediment. The FS noted that the LUCs and SMP would be consistent with the Mill Site Specific Plan (MSSP; Mill Site Coordinating Committee, 2012; Figure 2-1 in the FS) in which Pond 7 would remain a pond and the surrounding area would be open space. Given that MSSP envisions Pond 7 unchanged and the surrounding area as open space, it is unclear how institutional controls consistent with the MSSP will effectively control risk associated with recreational use at Pond 7. Please expand the text to clarify how Alternative 2 will be effective given the 53 picograms per gram (pg/g) dioxin toxic equivalent (TEQ) remedial goal in the FS and residual concentrations in Pond 7.
20. Section 4 Summary of Recommended Alternatives, Table 4-1. Column 4 of the table states that the full footprint of Pond 7 was excavated. However, this appears to conflict with Section 1.1.2.1.2 which states that excavation of sediment sufficient to reduce residual dioxin TEQ concentrations (between 93 and 350 pg/g) to below the not-to-exceed (NTE) sediment goals was not feasible. Please clarify the table entry on this point.

21. Please include a List of Acronyms and Abbreviations in the FS Addendum.

Toxicology Comments:

1. Section 4 Summary of Recommended Alternatives. HERO notes the following:
 - a. Section 4 states the recommended alternatives for Pond 6, Pond 7, Pond 8, and North Pond AOCs are appropriate because the human health risk evaluated are within the risk management range.
 - b. Section 4 also states that the institutional controls in the recommended remedies are protective given the exposure point concentrations relative to the NTE and commercial/industrial values.
 - c. The NTE, estimated lifetime cancer risk (ELCR), and hazard index (HI) values cited in the Addendum are based on a 2015 HHRA, which used the appropriate methods and criteria available at that time. However, HHRA is now outdated due to updated toxicity criteria and default exposure factors.

HERO notes the clean-up goal of 53 pg/g dioxin TEQ from the 2019 Feasibility Study is still protective of human health and in line with DTSC HHRA Note 2. HERO recommends demonstrating how the recommended alternatives in the Addendum are protective of human health given the EPC values of dioxin TEQ and/or arsenic in Pond 6, Pond 7, Pond 8, and North Pond AOCs are greater than the clean-up goal of 53 pg/g dioxin TEQ and 10 mg/kg arsenic.

2. Human Health Risk Assessment: HERO requests the preparation of a revised HHRA as part of the future Remedial Action Completion Report if excavation is conducted. The revised HHRA should use current methodology, toxicity criteria, and exposure factors to evaluate the risk of any contamination remaining on-Site post remedy implementation.
3. Ecological Risk Assessment. In four text sections mentioning the BHHERA (“Reductions of Toxicity, Mobility, or Volume Through Treatment”), all references to “significant risk” to ecological receptors should be revised to “unacceptable risk” to ecological receptors.

Engineering Comments:

1. Section 1.1.2.1.2 Removal Action Area and Remedial Alternative

Development. The last sentence in the first paragraph states that the land surface surrounding Pond 7 is approximately 2 feet above the observed water level. Revise the text to indicate whether freeboard needs to be maintained, what the allowable freeboard should be (including the source), and how the freeboard was determined (is the driver seismic, prevention of overtopping during storms, etc.). Describe if the observed water level is the historical highest observed water level, average observed water level, and when the water level observations were made. The observed water level should be clarified to allow a proper evaluation of the related statements made in the FS Addendum.

2. Section 1.1.2.2.2 Removal Action Area and Remedial Alternative Development. It is stated in the second sentence in the second paragraph that the area exceeding remedial goals is assumed to be over North Pond and Pond 6 footprints to depths between 2 and 5 feet. The exceedance depths should be based on site-specific characterization data. Revise the text to include details to support the assumption on the exceedance depths.
3. Section 1.1.2.2.2 Removal Action Area and Remedial Alternative Development. The fourth sentence in the second paragraph states that an estimated 2,200 cubic yards (CY) of sediment containing concentrations above unrestricted cleanup goals remain in the North Pond and Pond 6 assuming an exceedance depth of approximately 6 feet. The 6-foot depth is inconsistent with assumed 2- to 5-foot depth of exceedance assumed in the second sentence of the same paragraph. Revise the text to remove the inconsistency and provide supporting information for the assumed 6-foot depth and recalculate the estimated volume as necessary.
4. Section 1.1.2.3.2 Removal Action Area and Remedial Alternative Development. The first sentence in the first paragraph states that Pond 8 sediment depths range from 6 to 24 feet. The second sentence in the second paragraph states that sediment thickness ranges up to approximately 25 feet. This is inconsistent with the first sentence in the first paragraph. The first sentence in the second paragraph states that the area for remedial alternative development for Pond 8 is the entire 280,000 square foot pond area. However, it is stated in Section 1.1.2.3, that Pond 8 is 7.3 acres (which equates to approximately 318,000 square feet). Revise the text to clarify the Pond 8 footprint area and maximum sediment thickness/depth.
5. Section 2.1 Creek Daylighting. It is stated in the second paragraph that creek daylighting is not relevant to the remediation of pond sediment where

the objective is selection of an appropriate and effective remedial technology for managing dioxins/furans in OU-E aquatic-sediment. It is stated in the third paragraph that the Mill Pond is “daylighted” from the outlets of the City’s Maple and Alder Creek storm drain outfalls in Pond 8 East to the ocean and the City stormwater contains dioxins/furans, and newly constructed ponds and/or bioswales would collect additional dioxins/furans-impacted sediment to be managed. These statements appear contradictory and the third paragraph does not provide further clarity to what is stated in second paragraph. Please delete the current third paragraph and replace it with an explanation of how future daylighting of creeks is not necessarily precluded by the remediation of OU-E sediment and that the public’s vision for the site will be considered under the Community Acceptance modifying criterion, as discussed in DTSC Project Manager Comment 10.

6. Section 2.2.1 Sediment Remedial Technologies. It is stated in the second paragraph of the second bullet, Institutional Controls (ICs) and natural recovery, that natural recovery processes are present in aquatic sediment at the site and are documented in the OU-E Baseline Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment (BHHERA). Revise the text to discuss whether natural recovery is expected to achieve remedial goals in a reasonable timeframe.
7. Section 2.2.1 Sediment Remedial Technologies. It is stated in the first and second paragraphs in the third bullet, Containment, that covers with sand, gravel, or other suitable materials, or structures such as a dam or berm would be used for containment and a cover would be implemented as a vegetated barrier to cover sediments in the ponds to restrict exposure of potential receptors to affected media. It is not clear what regulatory criteria are considered applicable to the covers. Revise the text to include the identified cover/cap ARARs (regulations) that would apply to the cover/cap design.
8. Section 2.2.1 Sediment Remedial Technologies. It is stated in the first sentence of the fourth paragraph in the third bullet, Containment, that on-site consolidation in a lined cell may not be acceptable within the Coastal Zone. However, no basis for the statement is provided. Revise the text and include supporting information for the statement as well as indicating if the entire property or portions thereof fall within the Coastal Zone.
9. Section 2.2.1 Sediment Remedial Technologies. It is stated in the fifth and sixth bullets, in-situ biological treatment and in-situ chemical treatment, that installation and direct push injection activities to deliver reagents would be restricted for

sediments located in pond areas. It is not clear if horizontal injection to deliver reagents was considered. Revise the text to include discussion of horizontal reagent injection for reagent delivery.

10. Section 2.2.2 Recommended Alternative. It is stated in the second paragraph that a cutoff wall would be installed near the center of Pond 8 to divide it into two smaller ponds. Although dividing Pond 8 likely will remove Pond 8 from jurisdictional status under the Division of Safety of Dams, it is unlikely to change the stability considerations associated with Pond 8. Revise the text to include cutoff wall details, including wall type and depth as well as whether the smaller ponds will be connected and how flow between the ponds will be managed. In addition, the FS Addendum should include information on how stability (static and dynamic) will be addressed.
11. Section 2.3.1 Pond 8 West Excavation and Disposal. It is stated in the fourth sentence that material excavated from Pond 8 West would be transported to an appropriate non-hazardous waste disposal facility. Revise the text to include details to support the absence of hazardous waste within the proposed Pond 8 West excavation.
12. Section 2.3.2 Evaluation of Technology Types and Selection of Representative Process Options. It is stated in the second sentence in the fourth paragraph that a secant pile wall and jet grouting would likely not be accepted by the Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD) based on discussion in the December 17, 2024 meeting with agencies. Revise the text to include the basis for why a secant pile wall and jet grouting would likely not be accepted by DSOD.
13. Section 2.3.2 Evaluation of Technology Types and Selection of Representative Process Options. It is stated in the second bullet in the fifth paragraph that Pond 8 would continue to receive and treat stormwater from the site and the City following excavation of sediment to unrestricted use levels and relocation of the sediment to an onsite consolidation cell. Revise the text to include information to support that the ongoing/post-remedy implementation use of Pond 8 to receive and treat stormwater is compatible with the implemented remedy.
14. Section 2.3.2 Evaluation of Technology Types and Selection of Representative Process Options. It is stated in the sixth paragraph that on-site consolidation in a lined cell may not be acceptable within the Coastal Zone and has other issues with implementability, and the alternative was not retained for further evaluation. However, no reasons are provided why on-site consolidation in a

lined cell may not be acceptable. We note that the OU-A consolidation was constructed in the past at the site and the consolidation unit would be constructed with a contaminated area, akin to using the Area of Contamination concept as outlined by the US EPA. DTSC requests that the alternative is retained or a more thorough basis for not retaining it for further evaluation is provided. Revise the text to discuss why on-site consolidation in a lined cell may not be acceptable within the Coastal Zone and the issues with implementability.

15. Section 2.3.3.1 Pond 8 West Excavation and Disposal. It is stated in the fourth paragraph that sediment in Pond 8 East will remain in place, and institutional controls will be implemented to provide land use controls (LUCs) for future site use. We note that the criteria for leaving exposed sediment in place while allowing for unrestricted use is not included or the need for capping the sediments that are left in place. Revise the text and include the criteria for leaving sediment in place for unrestricted use, especially exposed sediment.
16. Section 3.1.1.1.2 Compliance with ARARs. It is stated in the third sentence in the second paragraph that additional analysis of the beach berm to assess future tidal conditions and sea level rise can be considered during design. We note that the fifth sentence in the second paragraph in Section 3.1.1.1 states that the beach berm would continue to protect Mill Pond 8 Dam from damage due to ocean intrusion in the lowland. Revise the text to state that sea level rise and climate change will be considered in design and address the feasibility of beach berm modifications, given the known zoning constraints.
17. Section 3.1.1.1.5 Short-Term Effectiveness. It is stated in the first paragraph that excavated sediment would be transported to an appropriate non-hazardous waste disposal facility, and each round-trip is estimated to be 400 miles. Revise the text to include the name of the landfill that is indicated to be about 200 miles away from the site and indicate that it is the closest permitted landfill.
18. Section 3.1.1.1.6 Implementability. There is no support provided in the text that the waste likely qualifies as non-hazardous waste for reduced disposal hazards and transport. No additional information is provided to support this assertion. The excavated material should be conservatively assumed to be hazardous for transport and disposal purposes unless there is positive evidence to support that it is non-hazardous. Revise the text accordingly as well as associated elements such as cost estimates.

19. Section 3.1.1.1.8 Overall Rating. It is stated that the benefits of the Pond 8 West excavation and disposal alternative are offset by the likelihood that not all sediment containing COCs would be able to be removed from Pond 8 West and a contingency remedy of containment and institutional controls would still be required. However, the drawbacks of any limited contaminated sediment that cannot be removed are likely outweighed by the significant volume reduction obtained via excavation and offsite disposal. Revise the text to include rationale for the offset given the expected significant differential between excavated and remaining contaminated sediment volume.
20. Appendix A Cost Summary Tables for Sediment Remediation Alternatives (Updated Appendix A, 2019 OU-E FS). The tables contain multiple lump sum amounts, but not all include adequate unit costs. Revise the tables to include the underlying unit costs for all lump sum amounts.
21. Appendix A Cost Summary Tables for Sediment Remediation Alternatives (Updated Appendix A, 2019 OU-E FS). Table Note 5 states that the cost estimate for the excavation and disposal alternative was previously presented in the 2019 OU-E FS and costs have been escalated to 2025 for comparison with new alternatives. Note 7 states that seawall costs are based on reported costs for seawalls constructed in California and are not based on site-specific conceptual design. Revise to include the cost escalator and use site-specific seawall costs given that construction costs are known to vary by region within the state or include details to support that the costs used are for areas similar to the site.

Geology Comments:

1. Recommended Alternative for Pond 8 – Institutional Controls. This recommended alternative appears misleading because it is more than just institutional controls. It also proposes modifications to the Mill Pond Dam. The proposed Mill Pond #8 Dam modifications include: 1) a rock slope protection (RSP) buttress at the crib wall section; 2) ground improvements and an earth-fill buttress at the eastern dam section; and 3) a cutoff wall installed near the center of the pond to divide it into two smaller ponds. In reviewing Appendix A Cost Summary Table - Sediment Remediation Alternatives Assumptions (Updated Appendix A, 2019 OU-E FS) we see the description of what is meant from item 5: “Mill Pond Dam Repairs - Exterior RSP.” We ask that the text under Section 2.2.2 Recommended Alternative – (third bullet) Pond 8 AOC clearly state that dam repairs are part of the “containment” recommended Alternative #2 Institutional Controls.

Table 3-1: Comparison of Remedial Alternatives (Updated Table 7-1, 2019 OU-E FS).

There is a copy/paste error regarding AOC North Pond and Pond 6, and Pond 7. The last “new” row entries under the columns titled “Alternative” and “Description” state the Pond 8 language instead of North Pond and Pond 6, and Pond 7. Please revise the last row entries for North Pond and Pond 6, and Pond 7 under the columns titled “Alternative” and “Description.”

CLOSING

Please revise the FS Addendum, address the above comments, and provide a response-to-comments table within 90 days of receipt of this letter. If you have any questions, please contact Morgan Bigelow, Project Manager, at (510) 589-2981 or via email at Morgan.Bigelow@dtsc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Morgan Bigelow, GIT
Project Manager
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program – Bay Area Cleanup Branch
Department of Toxic Substances Control

Reviewers:



Toxicology (Human Health)
Melissa Bolotaolo, PhD
Staff Toxicologist, DTSC HERO



Toxicology (Ecological Health)
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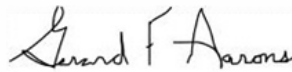
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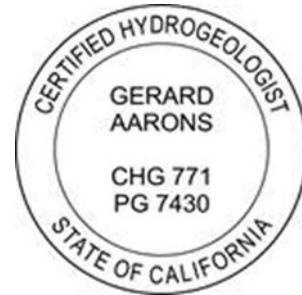
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