U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Ocean Service
Office of Response and Restoration
Assessment and Restoration Division
c/o EPA Region III 3HS41
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia PA 19103-2029

March 2, 2007

Qazi Salahuddin, Ph.D
Program Manager
DNREC-SIRB
391 Lukens Drive
New Castle, DE 19720

Dear Dr. Salahuddin:

NOAA has reviewed the independent report prepared by Schnabel Engineering regarding the evaluation of the proposed remedy for the DuPont Hay Road "Iron Rich" Site. NOAA is providing the following comments on this report as a federal Natural Resource Trustee and as an agency with extensive experience in assessment and remediation of coastal hazardous sites.

NOAA agrees with the findings in the independent report that there are concerns and/or deficiencies in the information used to support the proposed remedy, in particular related to the ecological risk assessment and contaminated sediments resulting from off site migration. Section 2.5 of the independent report, Potential Routes of Exposure, identified and evaluated the exposure pathways considered in DuPont's Remedial Investigation/Risk Assessment (RI/RA) report. In addition to the reports findings, NOAA believes that exposure pathways, as well as the extent of contamination, associated with sediments has not been adequately evaluated. This comment also applies to section 5.1.5.2 Ecological Risk Assessment, on Page 26 of the independent report (also discussed below).

Section 2.6.4, Persistence and Bioaccumulative Properties, on Page 7 of the independent report, does not really address the subject heading. NOAA recommends that it be acknowledged that PCBs, dioxins, and hexachlorobenzene are contaminants that are persistent in the environment and bioaccumulate in tissue of ecological receptors (e.g., fish) and humans.

Section 2.8 Ecological and Natural Resource Injury, on Page 7 of the independent report presents observations of birds and mammals at the site. However, the section does not include any information on risk and injury to aquatic resources in the Delaware River and Shellpot Creek. NOAA believes that the RI/RA report was incomplete relative to these concerns. This comment also applies to Section 5.1.2 on Page 22 of the independent report.

Section 5.1.5.2 Ecological Risk Assessment, on Page 26, presents carcinogenic risk estimates associated with human ingestion of fish. This discussion is more applicable to \ the evaluation of the human health risk assessment. NOAA believes that the assessment of ecological risk associated with bioaccumulation of PCBs, dioxins, and hexachlorobenzene in ecological receptors, particularly in fish, should be identified as a data gap in the RI/RA report.

Section 6.2 Onsite Versus Offsite Management, on Page 29, provides a summary of concerns related to managing the waste on-site including loss of land and potential impacts on and from the Delaware River. NOAA's preference would be for the material to be managed off-site thus increasing the opportunity for restoration of coastal natural resources and habitat along the Delaware River. On-site restoration activities could potentially be used to offset natural resource damages associated with contaminants released from the site.

NOAA looks forward to working with DNREC to address remedial and natural resource issues at the DuPont Hay Road "Iron Rich" Site. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at (215) 814-5419 at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Simeon Hahn
Regional Resource Coordinator
NOAA Office of Response and Restoration