

Gfredlee, 02:12 PM 3/15/98 , Protecting Zooplankton

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Please note the new arca code for telephone and fax has been changed to 530
 Via e-mail

March 15, 1998

Val Connor,
 Chris Foc
 Vic DeVlaming

Dear Val, Chris and Vic:

Recently I have brought to your attention some of my work on chromium VI toxicity issues. I wish to mention that Peter Chapman has accepted a condensed version of the report that I sent to you a couple of weeks ago as a Learned Discourse in the SETAC News. This should help bring national attention to the chromium VI and chromium III regulatory toxicity issues. That report as well as backup documents is available on my web site (<http://home.pacbell.net/gfredlee/index.htm/>). As you may recall, I have been concerned about the under-regulation of chromium VI and chromium III associated with just meeting US EPA water quality criteria. These criteria are not designed to protect zooplankton from chromium VI toxicity.

My purpose in contacting you now is to bring to your attention that I have recently learned that there is significant disagreement in the US EPA about the need to protect zooplankton as part of protecting fisheries. In discussing these issues with Phil Wood of US EPA Region 9, I questioned him about the notion that the US EPA in their criterion support documents can state that fish populations are protected when there is obvious toxicity to zooplankton. This is the issue with chromium VI and it is the reason why the US EPA is not including the toxicity of chromium VI to zooplankton at 0.5 µg/L as part of assessing the impact of chromium VI on fish populations. According to Phil, Chuck Stephan, who lead the US EPA Criteria Development Group for freshwaters, does not support protecting zooplankton as part of protecting fish populations. Phil indicated that he has been arguing with Chuck for years about this issue, however, Chuck is able to prevail. This has considerable importance to regulating chlorpyrifos, diazinon and other OP pesticides caused toxicity. It is going to be difficult to regulate OP pesticides because of their toxicity to zooplankton when the US EPA does not support the protection of zooplankton in the Agency's criterion documents. The same can be said about the Central Valley Regional Board with reference to chromium VI situations. The literature is clear that chromium VI is toxic to some zooplankton at 0.5 µg/L. These are not exotic zooplankton, but are common daphnid species. Yet, when I tried to raise this issue with the Board on protecting zooplankton from chromium VI toxicity, I had a hard time getting the Board and staff to even incorporate chronic toxicity limits into University of California, Davis wastewater discharge requirements for chromium-polluted groundwater that was to be discharged to Putah Creek. If zooplankton are to be protected, there is need to get the federal and state agencies to permit wastewater discharges to provide this protection.

I have recently reviewed several US EPA "Fact Sheets" prepared last

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August which indicated that a criterion document for diazinon was to be published in the Federal Register on September 30, 1997. Evidently the Agency did not meet its anticipated data publication. I will contact the US EPA representative listed on the Fact Sheet for further information.

If you have questions on this matter, please contact me.

---Fred

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